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Three Poems

Unpublished

By James Stephens

WOMEN

LISTEN, if but women were
Half as kind as they are fair,
There would be an end to all
Miseries that do appall.

Cloud and wind would fly together
In a dance of sunny weather:
And the happy trees would throw
Gifts to travellers below.

Then the lion, meek and mild,
With the lamb would, side by side,
Couch him friendly and would be
Innocent of enmity.

Then the Frozen Pole would go,
Shaking off his fields of snow,
To a kinder clime and dance
Warmly with the girls of France.

These: if women only were
Half as kind as they are fair.

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THE GIRL I LEFT BEHIND ME

She watched the blaze,
And so I said the thing I'd come to say,
Pondered for days.

Her lips moved slow,
And then a widened eye she flashed upon me
Sudden as a blow.

She turned again,
Her hands clasping her knees and did not speak:
She did not deign.

And I, poor gnome!
A chided cur crawls to a hole to hide.
. . . I toddled home.

THE TINKER'S BRAT

I saw a beggar woman bare
Her bosom to the winter air;
And into the tender nest
Of her famished mother-breast
    She laid her child
    And him beguiled
With crooning song into his rest.

With crooning song and tender word
About a little singing bird
Who spread her wings about her brood,
And tore her bosom up for food,
    And sang the while
    Them to beguile
All in the forest's solitude.

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Which hearing one could scarcely see
That she was clad in misery :
For in her heart there was a glow
Warmed her bare feet in the snow :
In her heart was hid a sun
Would warm the world for every one.

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Richmodis

A Legend of Old Cologne

By Charles Newton-Robinson

When in Cologne the Plague was loose
It counted each tenth soul;
Of marriage-bed and maidenhead
Alike, it had a toll.

Rich heritage and poor old age,
The gay and the unkempt,
The wise, the fool, the child at school,
Alike were not exempt.

To Mengis von Adücht's house it came
And entered not by door;
But as thieves by stealth go plundering wealth,
Clomb to the chamber floor.

For there, amid her children three,
Richmodis dwelt in fear:
The fair young wife, who, more than life,
Was to Sir Mengis dear.

Sir Mengis rode alone all day,
A-hunting in the wild:
When at evenfall he reached his hall,
There came his eldest child,

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Pale Ermengarde, with tear-wet eyes,
And " Father dear," she said,
" Mother doth keep so fast asleep,
We children are afraid."

And lo ! her eyes wide open still,
Laid on her wedding bed,
He saw his wife, as fair as life,
But pale and cold as dead.

He chafed her with his strong warm hands,
To warm her chilly breast :
He kissed her with his soft warm lips,
Upon her bosom pressed ;

But not a flutter of the pulse,
Or motion of a limb,
Or lips to speak, or flush of cheek,
Gave any hope to him.

He lit a candle at her head,
And a candle at her feet :
" Sweet, for thy shrift thy wedding-shift
Shall be thy winding-sheet.

" Still shalt thou wear thy wedding-ring,
That so it may be known,
Till time shall be I rest with thee
I still am all thine own ! "

Richmodis with her eyes beheld
And knew his deeds of love :
Nay every word Richmodis heard,
And yet she could not move.

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Sir Mengis with his own hands laid
  Her in her wedding-chest ;
Since all had fear to trust them near
  The chosen of the Pest.

And when the sullen morning rose,
  He led his horses twain ;
Which side by side they used to ride,
  And yoked them to his wain.

And thus to the Apostles' Church
  The living-dead conveyed,
And feared, though banned, with naked brand,
  He forced the sexton's aid.

But in the dark hours of the night
  Befell an evil thing :
The sexton came, with greed aflame,
  To steal the golden ring.

Lo ! when his earthy fingers touched
  The living-dead's white hand,
A thrill of shame flushed through her frame,
  And she could speak and stand !

The felon sexton, grey with awe,
  Made off, with haggard eyes :
Richmodis rose, as one who knows
  Nor terror, nor surprise ;

Nay, like an angel doing God's will,
  Richmodis reached the door :
The moonlight faint threw blazoning quaint,
  Athwart the dusky floor.

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But when she saw the open street,
Where the wind blew biting-cold,
" O Christ ! " she prayed, " give aid, give aid !
To reach my own threshold !

" My feet are bare, my limbs are numb,
This thin silk shift is all
I have to hide and warm my side,
Till I reach my husband's hall ! "

A Word she seemed to hear in Heaven,
And lo ! from church to hall,
The cold moon-ray shone warm as day,
And her feet were not let fall !

A moment at the guarded gate
She bode, to hear the hour :
Their due twelve times the midnight chimes
Tolled from the belfry tower.

Richmodis then with both her hands
The heavy knocker raised ;
But long must wait till at the gate
Her maid looked out adazed.

" O Annchen ! open straight to me !
In God's name open straight ! "
But like one lost, who sees a ghost,
The girl fled from the gate.

" O master ! master ! come and look,
Some ghost is here outside ! "
He weened it were the shade of her
Which had so lately died.

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And shuddering to the gate he went :
" Who stands there, in God's name ? "
" 'Tis I, thy wife ! God grants me life !
Lock me not out, for shame ! "

" How canst thou be Richmodis mine
I buried yestermorn ?
My horses twain, it were as vain
To dream, would leave their corn,

" And stumble up the winding-stair,
And from the garret gaze,
As that she could slide the stone aside,
Two men could hardly raise ! "

But while he spake, a noise arose
And up the winding-stair,
His horses twain (nor spur nor rein
To guide them) sped like air,

And from the garret window gazed
And whinnied welcome true ;
Those guileless eyes, with no surprise,
Their living mistress knew.

Sir Mengis loosened bolt and bar
And took her to his heart :
" Nor fate nor spell, nor grave nor hell
Us two shall now dispart ! "

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Two Poems

By Lilian Sauter

THE PAUSE

Surely our life, in essence, is concrete
Eternal verity, and death
Only the pause in the incessant beat
Of many-pulsing life, the breath
Indrawn, the wave receding that returns ?

Not the eternal dark which severeth,
Not quenching of the light that burns ;
Only a moment's holding of the breath,
A moment's darkening of the sight,
A hush, a step, the unknown openeth—

On the alternate wave-beat of the light ?

THE AVIATOR

O God ! To have the world below our feet !
To mount, and glide, and soar, and looking down
Upon the little men that dot the street,
And all the tiny tracing of the town ;

For once to measure with an infinite span
The little things of earth, from heaven's great height,
And thence to view the works and ways of man,
And judge their values with a clearer sight !

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O Joy! to race the winds, and hear them singing,
To cleave the clouds, and spring, and swoop, and rise,
And on and on, in the infinite, up-winging,
With throbbing pulse, and sun-confronting eyes!

To soar, alone, above, in the immense
Blue freedom of the sky, where time and space
Dissolve in joy of motion, and the sense
Of power outruns the little earthly race

Of creeping men—O God! what joy of fine
New being this! Shall not our race grow fair,
With powers like these? Greater, more free, divine?
From kinship with the all-transcending air!

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"The Women of Shakespeare"

By Frank Harris

ARTICLE V

We have traced Shakespeare's love from its dawning in Rosaline and Juliet, through realistic portraits like that of Rosaline in *Love's Labour's Lost*, and idealistic sketches such as Julia, Portia, Beatrice, and Rosalind to its noontide in his passion for the "dark lady" of the sonnets.

Here at length he finally loses faith in his gipsy mistress and his love purged of trust and affection hardens to lust and shows itself in jealous rage in *Hamlet* and *Othello*. In *Lear* the jealousy has bred despair, and the despair shrills to madness and the more awful dread of madness: in *Timon* the ravings die gradually away in moans and cursings to the inevitable end.

Each of these tragedies marks a stage in Shakespeare's agony: we can trace his descent to the ultimate of human suffering by the stains of his bleeding feet on the flints and thorns of the rough way. After *Timon* there is no more to be said. But the rhythm of life is never so symmetrical-perfect as the rhythm of art. When Shakespeare wrote *Lear* and *Timon*, he tasted the very bitterness of despair and death: his dark mistress had probably drawn away from him completely in some new infatuation; but a little later, when he wrote *Troilus and Cressida* and *Antony and Cleopatra*, the sky had grown lighter again and the sun shone through the clouds. *Antony and Cleopatra* is evidence sufficient that his mistress had been kind to him; it is the St. Martin's summer, so to speak, of his passion: the warmth and sunshine and ecstasy of joy are in it.

This irregular rhythm of life is more pathetic than the inevitable parabola of art. If Shakespeare had gone steadily down to

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despair from the sonnets, through *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *Macbeth* to *Lear* and *Timon*, we should not have been so moved as by the exquisitely sharp renascence to life and love in *Troilus and Cressida* which is followed by the exultant passion of *Antony and Cleopatra*, where the flowers bloom again in the sunny warmth, and the love-birds sing before the final desolation.

These two plays contain Shakespeare's finest portraits of his great mistress. *Troilus and Cressida* was probably revised as late as 1605–6: I have given my reasons elsewhere for thinking the revision an earlier work than *Antony and Cleopatra*. With the exception of *Timon*, *Troilus and Cressida* is the harshest play Shakespeare ever wrote: it is steeped in contempt for poor humanity. I have found in the poet's life the explanation of this intensified misery. Not only is he suffering almost past hope from the unfaith of his gipsy-wanton, but he has been plagued by the rivalry of the poet Chapman, whom he describes with exquisite insight in the sonnets as something of a pedant. Chapman translated Homer and glorified the Greeks: Shakespeare therefore jeers at the "war for a placket" . . . "all the argument," he tells us, "is a cuckold and a whore"; he makes Achilles a cowardly ruffian and "the king of men" a mouthing imbecile; he will not even leave us the ideal picture of Hector and Andromache: Hector challenges Ajax and then withdraws from the fight out of regard for the blood of his "sacred aunt" which flows in Ajax' veins.

As I have said elsewhere, no one was ever better fitted to appreciate the grace of Greece and the magic of Greek plastic art than Shakespeare; had he possessed Jonson's knowledge of the language, he would have left us divine pictures of Greek life. But Chapman had made up to Herbert, and his pedantry and overpraised Homer had got upon Shakespeare's nerves, who now spewed out his contempt of his rival's classical learning in *Timon* and in *Troilus and Cressida*.

It may be possible to get nearer to Shakespeare's life than this while showing how his personal experiences affected even his mature art. We know a good deal about the bitter quarrel between Ben Jonson on the one side and Dekker and Marston on the other; it seems probable that Shakespeare when creating

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Ajax made the character life-like and recognisable by lending the stout Grecian some of Ben Jonson's peculiarities; and perhaps "rank" Thersites shows Shakespeare's judgment of Dekker.

Here is the portrait of Ajax put in the mouth of Alexander:

"This man, lady, hath robbed many beasts of their particular additions; he is as valiant as the lion, churlish as the bear, slow as the elephant: a man into whom nature hath so crowded humours that his valour is crushed into folly, his folly sauced with discretion: there is no man hath a virtue that he hath not a glimpse of, nor any man an attaint but he carries some strain of it; he is melancholy without cause, and merry against the hair: he hath the joints of everything, but everything so out of joint that he is a gouty Briareus, many hands and no use; or purblind Argus, all eyes and no sight. . . ."

This is too precise portraiture for an historical figure; it is evident that Shakespeare had some contemporary in mind when he thus individualised Ajax. I cannot but think he was glancing at Ben Jonson, his constant and not always fair critic, in this astonishingly realistic description. That "gouty Briareus" is poisonously clever and the "purblind Argus, all eyes and no sight" flicks the raw spot with consummate skill. It looks to me as if Shakespeare were paying off old scores in thus ridiculing his fellows; his caricature of Jonson is on the whole good-humoured and extremely effective, whereas his opinion of Dekker, though Dekker was supposed to be his partisan, is sharpened by contemptuous aversion. Nothing gives a better idea of Shakespeare's extraordinary insight than these disdainful glances at his contemporaries. They had not made life very pleasant to him, as we know; he retorts by showing the clumsiness and ineptitude which disfigured Jonson's strength and the foulness which prevented the gutter-mind of Dekker from rendering a fair reflection of earth and sky. But even here while giving play to keen eyes, he judges with imperial fairness: his friends fare worse at his hands than his enemies.

The main current of the poet's bitterness in *Troilus and Cressida* as in all his other tragedies flows from his disappointed and defiled love. At length he has found his opportunity: ten years have passed since he first sketched his proud witty wanton

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mistress for us as Rosaline in *Love's Labour's Lost;* now he will give us another realistic portrait of her; but this time he will not merely tell us she's "a light girl" with black eyes, he'll show her in act; she shall live for us and play the old game before our eyes. By this time Shakespeare had come to realise, I imagine, that his passion was extraordinary and noteworthy and of purpose and with self-conscious art he set to work to paint it.

The physical traits which identify Cressida with Rosaline and the "dark lady" of the sonnets are at first slight; mere indications in fact; and only to be thus construed because they are wholly unnecessary in the play.

The tragedy opens with a dialogue between Troilus and Cressida's uncle Pandar. Troilus begins by talking in Shakespeare's very strain of the "cruel war * here within" himself: he goes on:

> . . . I am weaker than a woman's tear,
> Tamer than sleep, fonder than ignorance. . . .

In just the same strain Hamlet lamented his tameness; he lacked "gall to make oppression bitter"; but this "fonder than ignorance" is Shakespeare's later confession.

Pandar praises Cressida's beauty: "An her hair were not somewhat darker than Helen's—well, go to—there were no more comparison between the women . . . I would not . . . praise her . . . but I would somebody had heard her talk yesterday, as I did. I will not dispraise your sister Cassandra's wit, but . . ."

A little later he babbles again:

> I care not an she were a black-a-moor; 'tis all one to me.

The identity is unmistakable; Cressida is a dark beauty with astonishing wit; every touch is of Shakespeare's cunning mistress Rosaline-Fitton: Troilus cries like Romeo:

> She is stubborn-chaste against all suit.

Then Cressida is introduced to talk about Troilus: while Pandar praises him she runs him down, till Pandar gets annoyed:

* In *Julius Cæsar*, Brutus, another incarnation of Shakespeare, talked of being "with himself at war."

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One knows not at what ward you lie.

At once this stubborn-chaste Cressida replies: "Upon my back to defend my belly; upon my wit to defend my wiles; upon my secrecy to defend mine honesty" and so on, more and more lewdly. When Pandar is going away she calls him "a bawd," and this is how this virgin talks to herself:

> But more in Troilus thousand-fold I see
> Than in the glass of Pandar's praise may be;
> Yet hold I off. Women are angels, wooing:
> Things won are done; joy's soul lies in the doing.
> That she beloved knows nought that knows not this:
> Men prize the thing ungain'd more than it is:
> That she was never yet that ever knew
> Love got so sweet as when desire did sue. . . .

This is manifestly the same woman whom Bertram described to us in *All's Well* with her pretended "restraint," "infinite cunning," and self-abandonment, and whom Antony is shortly to describe as "cunning past men's thought": this is the whitely wanton, Rosaline, who loved to fence with words—the lewder the better. No virgin ever had this science of Cressida.

We do not see Cressida again till Pandar in the third act brings her to Troilus in the orchard: Shakespeare has painted the love-scene for us more lusciously than love-scene was ever painted before or since.

What a fascination his mistress must have had for him to enable him after years of intimacy to realise this recrudescence of passion with such throbbing intensity! His mouthpiece, Troilus, cries:

> I am giddy; expectation whirls me round.
> The imaginary relish is so sweet
> That it enchants my sense: what will it be,
> When that the watery palate tastes indeed
> Love's thrice repured nectar? *death, I fear me,*
> *Swounding destruction, or some joy too fine,*
> *Too subtle-potent, tuned too sharp in sweetness*
> *For the capacity of my ruder powers:*
> *I fear it much;** and I do fear besides,
> That I shall lose distinction in my joys;
> As doth a battle, when they charge on heaps
> The enemy flying.

* The italics are mine. This is the supremest utterance of passion in all Shakespeare. This fear that the intensity of the emotion will lame the "ruder powers"

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Pandar, too, describes Cressida in much the same way :

> She's making her ready, she'll come straight :
> . . . She does so blush. . . . It is the prettiest villain :
> she fetches her breath as short as a new-ta'en sparrow.
> TRO. Even such a passion doth embrace my bosom :
> My heart beats thicker than a feverous pulse. . . .

The lovers' talk at first is nothing wonderful—all hesitation on her part and admiration on his. But Cressida is the first to end the fencing. I must transcribe a page. Shakespeare has written nothing finer :

> CRES. Boldness comes to me now, and brings me heart.
> Prince Troilus, I have loved you night and day
> For many weary months.
> TRO. Why was my Cressid then so hard to win ?
> CRES. Hard to seem won : but I was won, my lord,
> With the first glance that ever—pardon me—
> If I confess much, you will play the tyrant.
> I love you now ; but not till now, so much
> But I might master it : in faith I lie ;
> My thoughts were like unbridled children, grown
> Too headstrong for their mother. See we fools !
> Why have I blabb'd ? who shall be true to us,
> When we are so unsecret to ourselves ?
> But, though I loved you well, I woo'd you not :
> And yet, good faith, I wish'd myself a man,
> Or that we women had men's privilege
> Of speaking first. . . .

Then she will go away :

> . . . I know not what I speak.
> TRO. Well know they what they speak that speak so wisely.
> CRES. Perchance my lord, I show more craft * than love :

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of the body can only be felt in a man's love for a woman. In her love for Bassanio Portia fears the " too much " of the emotion, but naturally without any reference to the body. In Sonnet 23, which I have already described as the only cry of passion addressed to the youth in any writing of Shakespeare, we are confronted with the same overpowering desire and the same dread : now what should we infer from this ? Only one deduction, it seems to me, is possible. This nervous fear lest the very force of desire should mar the performance is manifestly borrowed from Shakespeare's desire for his mistress ; it is utterly affected and insincere when addressed to the youth. Just in the same way Shakespeare pictures Venus begging Adonis again and again not to let his beauty die without leaving children to inherit it, and then addresses the same prayer to his man-friend in the first eighteen sonnets, where from a man to a man the prayer is wholly out of place and insincere.

* This reminds me of Juliet's declaration, and serves to show how far Shakespeare has travelled in knowledge of his mistress in the eight or ten years :

> But trust me, gentlemen, I'll prove more true
> Than those that have more cunning to be strange.

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And fell so roundly to a large confession,
To angle for your thoughts: but you are wise,
Or else you love not, for to be wise and love
Exceeds man's might; that dwells with gods above. . . .

The last two lines are plainly Shakespeare's own reflection. Troilus answers Cressida in a way which shows the disillusion of all Shakespeare's desperate hopes; for why should young Troilus not believe his love? The whole passage is an intimate confession, and in the last two lines Shakespeare again laments that his simple constancy is at a disadvantage with his mistress's opalescent changes of fancy:

O that I thought it could be in a woman—
As, if it can, I will presume in you—
To feed for aye her lamp and flames of love;
To keep her constancy in plight and youth,
Outliving beauty's outward, with a mind
That doth renew swifter than blood decays!
Or that persuasion could but thus convince me,
That my integrity and truth to you
Might be affronted with the match and weight
Of such a winnow'd purity in love;
How were I then uplifted! but, alas!
I am as true as truth's simplicity
And simpler than the infancy of truth. . . .

The next morning Cressida is as charming-frank as Juliet: ". . . . Night hath been too brief," she says, and Troilus wishes that "the busy day had not been wakened by the lark."

A few minutes afterwards when Cressida is told that she will have to leave Troilus she swears that she will "not go from Troy"; she will not even hear of moderation in her grief.

The grief is fine, full, perfect, that I taste,
And violenteth in a sense as strong
As that which causeth it: how can I moderate it?

She will be a "woful Cressid 'mongst the merry Greeks." And then this Troilus though only a youth speaks again with the insight of disillusioned Shakespeare: he doubts Cressida's truth and his own merit. The whole passage deserves to be weighed word by word though space forbids me to transcribe more than a part of it: he says to his mistress:

. . . I do not call your faith in question
So mainly as my merit: I cannot sing,
Nor heel the high lavolt, nor sweeten talk
Nor play at subtle games; fair virtues all.

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To which the Grecians are most prompt and pregnant :
But I can tell that in each grace of these
There lurks a still and dumb-discoursive devil
That tempts most cunningly : but be not tempted.
CRES. Do you think I will ?
TRO. No.
But something may be done that we will not.

I have put this last line in italics and shall return to it again.

Then we have the terrible scene in the fifth act in which Cressida angles for Diomedes, just as she aforetime angled for Troilus. Ulysses and Troilus witness the whole scene. She begins with a beseeching which in itself is a confession :

Sweet honey Greek, tempt me no more to folly.

Cressida pretends coyness, and Diomedes bids her good night, "I'll be your fool no more." Troilus-Shakespeare's comment is astonishing :

Thy better must.

Then she strokes Diomedes' cheek and he asks a token from her for surety. She gives him the very sleeve which Troilus had given her. When they say "good night" she reminds Diomedes of his promise with "I prithee, come," and talks to herself in this way :

Troilus, farewell ! one eye yet looks on thee ;
But with my heart the other eye doth see.
Ah, poor our sex ! this fault in us I find,
The error of our eye directs our mind : . . .

The first two lines though weak are important to us : the two last of course are Shakespeare's comment.

After this it is no wonder that Ulysses wants to go :

Why stay we then ?

Troilus-Shakespeare answers :

To make a recordation to my soul
Of every syllable that here was spoke. . . .

There is a famous sonnet in which Shakespeare warns his dark mistress not to be faithless before his very eyes, for that may push him to madness and revenge, and when I read this scene in *Troilus and Cressida* I feel that Shakespeare had either seen his mistress betray him or overheard her. Those words of Troilus ring in my brain :

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To make a recordation to my soul
Of every syllable that here was spoke.

We have seen long ago that it was a trick of Shakespeare when intensely moved to coin a new word or word-form; his exquisite sensibility invents a new symbol. The word "recordation" is a confession to me.

There is no reason given for Cressida's unfaithfulness. She was as loose as a wanton boy; folly tempted her: Greek and Trojan alike were honey to her and all hours of day and night appropriate.

At first sight of her Ulysses, who is the wisdom of the play, condemns her, as Shakespeare got the Abbess in *The Comedy of Errors* to condemn his jealous wife Adriana. I hear Shakespeare's severe ethical judgment of his mistress in every word:

. . . Fie, fie upon her!
There's language in her eye, her cheek, her lip,
Nay her foot speaks; her wanton spirit looks out
At every joint and motive of her body.
O, these encounterers, so glib of tongue,
That give accosting welcome ere it comes,
And wide unclasp the tables of their thoughts
To every ticklish reader! set them down
For sluttish spoils of opportunity
And daughters of the game. . . .

And yet though her falseness is displayed so bitterly, she is not punished in any way.

Before I leave this drama I must go back one moment to the warning of Troilus, which I marked in italics. Troilus tells Cressida "something may be done that we will not": the Grecians, he says, can "play at subtle games." Now what are these "subtle games" of love that "tempt most cunningly"? We noticed just the same insinuation in the words of Parolles about Bertram-Herbert in *All's Well*. In Act v. 3, Parolles says that he knew of a promise of marriage by Bertram *and things which would derive me ill-will to speak of*; Herbert then had done even worse than promise marriage. Shakespeare wants to leave us with the impression that his mistress was so given to the pleasures of sense that the most subtle and cunning sensualist among her lovers would have the greatest influence over her. He wishes to suggest that Mary Fitton preferred Herbert

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and others to himself because they practised "subtle" games of love which he would not condescend to use. The accusation was probably true, though I doubt the implied superiority.

Shakespeare then allows Cressida to assure us that she has always one eye on Troilus-Shakespeare, even when the other is on Diomedes or her newest fancy. That is the truth I imagine. Her love of Shakespeare is the single redeeming trait in Cressida-Fitton; otherwise she is as loose as she was ten years before in 1597 when we first met her as Rosaline in *Love's Labour's Lost.*

There is no picture in all literature of so delightful and frank a wanton as Shakespeare's Cressida; she is almost too soulless a daughter of the game to be human—"the sluttish sport of opportunity." There must have been something more in Shakespeare's gipsy than wiles and wantonness. We know from the sonnets that there was might and boldness of personality in her; but was there nothing else? We shall soon see.

The next play we come to is Shakespeare's masterpiece of passion; in *Antony and Cleopatra* he gives us the greatest woman-portrait that ever was painted; here we shall see his wanton mistress at her best queening it imperially.

The whole interest of this long play is concentrated on Antony and on Cleopatra. Antony is talked of by the professors as "a supreme poetical creation . . . as unique as Hamlet," and we may assume before proof that Shakespeare will identify himself with the lover, Antony; but a little doubt of the perfectness of the portraiture must remain in us; for Antony was a great captain and fighter. Even in Plutarch his qualities as a man of action are only obscured by his passion for Cleopatra; she "quenched the goodness . . . and the hope of rising in him . . . and stirred up many vices"; but first and last he was a great soldier. Gentle sensitive Shakespeare we may be sure, with his Hamlet-like poetic nature, will depict the lover for us to the life; but how will he render the captain?

Plutarch has not given him much help: he too has taken the leader of men for granted, and Shakespeare finds no magic in himself to better his model. In this drama Antony lives for us as a lover, a gorgeous, generous, kindly lover, but nothing

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more. *Antony and Cleopatra* is even more of a lyric, a lust-lyric it is true, than *Romeo and Juliet*. The character of Antony is only obscured for us by the soldierly achievements which Shakespeare following Plutarch attributes to him. "The triple pillar of the world" has no kinship for Shakespeare, no attraction even till he is "transform'd into a strumpet's fool." Hamlet-Shakespeare is here in a *rôle* only partially suited to him and consequently Antony is not one of Shakespeare's best character pictures.

But under the thin armour, so to speak, of the Roman general, Shakespeare paints himself for us to the life This Antony-Shakespeare can be distinguished easily in almost every scene. Now and then indeed certain qualities of Shakespeare come to more superb and perfect expression in Antony than in any other of the dramatist's heroes, for Shakespeare's skill of hand increased to the end.

I have called Shakespeare the ideal lover with the best tongue in the world. Listen to him in the first scene of the first act:

> CLEO. If it be love indeed, tell me how much.
> ANT. There's beggary in the love that can be reckon'd.
> CLEO. I'll set a bourn how far to be beloved.
> ANT. Then must thou needs find out new heaven, new earth.

The great wings of the poet's passion beat in the superb phrase. In the very first act Antony sees with Shakespeare's clearness of vision that he must break these "strong Egyptian fetters" or "lose himself in dotage"; but he is not strong enough to carry his insight to act. Shakespeare marks in Antony his own understanding that all remorse is pernicious:

> Things that are past are done with me.

Antony, too, gives explicit and reiterated expression to that love of truth, at all costs, which was the sign at once and pole-star of Shakespeare's intelligence:

> Who tells me true, though in his tale lie death,
> I hear him as he flatter'd. . . .

Again this Shakespeare-Antony cries:

> Speak to me home, mince not the general tongue,
> Name Cleopatra as she is call'd in Rome;

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Rail thou in Fulvia's phrase, and taunt my faults
With such full license as both truth and malice
Have power to utter. O, then we bring forth weeds,
When our quick minds lie still, and our ills told us
Is as our earing . .

To hear of our faults, Shakespeare says, is as the ploughing and fecundating of the mind. The dignity, too, with which Antony confesses his fault to Cæsar and himself pronounces absolution, is finely characteristic of Shakespeare.

Cleopatra's belief, however, that Antony was "the greatest soldier of the world" does not convince us; nor Pompey's statement that his "soldiership is twice the other twain . . ." We are rather inclined to credit Shakespeare himself when he tells us through Cæsar that Shakespeare-Antony is child-like in maturity and will "pawn his experience to present pleasure." That is the real judgment of the man of action on the artist-lover.

When his insensate passion has brought him to ruin this Antony-Shakespeare naturally reaches supreme utterance. As soon as he is defeated the old phrase rises to his lips:

I am so lated in the world, that I
Have lost my way for ever: . . .

but he has a ship laden with gold to bestow upon his friends.

When Cleopatra comes to beg forgiveness for betraying him, he must put his fault on her; but when Enobarbus—who is the intellectual conscience, so to speak, of the play—is asked who is in fault, he tells the simple truth:

Antony only, that would make his will
Lord of his reason . . .

In spite of this condemnation, Shakespeare having Mary Fitton in mind persists in making Antony blame Cleopatra, though this feminine railing is an unnecessary weakness in Antony.

. . . whither hast thou led me, Egypt?

he cries, and again in words that are from Shakespeare's very soul:

. . . Egypt, thou knew'st too well
My heart was to thy rudder tied by the strings,
And thou shouldst tow me after: o'er my spirit
Thy full supremacy thou knew'st, and that
Thy beck might from the bidding of the gods
Command me.

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His gipsy queen begs again for pardon, and he gives it in a quick change of mood most generously :

> Fall not a tear, I say : one of them rates
> All that is won and lost : give me a kiss ;
> Even this repays me. . . .
> . . . Fortune knows
> We scorn her most when most she offers blows.

But when a little later he finds her allowing Cæsar's messenger, Thyreus, to kiss her hand, he rages against her, as we have seen Shakespeare raging again and again in half a dozen different tragedies against Mary Fitton :

> You have been a boggler ever :
> But when we in our viciousness grow hard—
> O misery on't !—the wise gods seel our eyes ;
> In our own filth drop our clear judgments ; make us
> Adore our errors ; laugh at's, while we strut
> To our confusion.
> CLEO. O, is't come to this ?
> ANT. I found you as a morsel cold upon
> Dead Cæsar's trencher ; nay, you were a fragment
> Of Cneius Pompey's ; besides what hotter hours,
> Unregister'd in vulgar fame, you have
> Luxuriously pick'd out : for I am sure,
> Though you can guess what temperance should be,
> You know not what it is. . . .
> . . . . . .
> O, that I were
> Upon the hill of Basan, to outroar
> The horned herd ! for I have savage cause.
> . . . . . .

But all this raving insane jealousy with its "savage cause" is only the obverse of the man's intense desire. He soon forgives her ; calls her "my heart" and cries :

> . . . Come
> Let's have one other gaudy night : . . .

This Antony-Shakespeare who has lost everything including honour yet in his abandonment finds treasure in the richness of his soul. When he hears that Enobarbus has left him, he sends his money after him with nobly generous Shakespeare words :

> Go, Eros, send his treasure after ; do it ;
> Detain no jot, I charge thee : write to him—
> I will subscribe—gentle adieux and greetings ;
> Say that I wish he never find more cause
> To change a master. O, my fortunes have
> Corrupted honest men ! . .

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Surely this is the gentlest, wisest soul that ever revealed its sweetness in literature.

Betrayed again by Cleopatra, Antony finds supreme expression for his contempt :

> . . . Betray'd I am :
> O, this false soul of Egypt ! this grave charm
> Whose eye beck'd forth my wars, and call'd them home ;
> Whose bosom was my crownet, my chief end—
> Like a right gipsy, hath at fast and loose,
> Beguiled me to the very heart of loss . . .

Yet as soon as he hears that Cleopatra is dead he closes the sweet-scented book and follows eagerly :

> Unarm, Eros : the long day's task is done,
> And we must sleep . . .

His passion for his gipsy-wanton holds to the end :

> I here importune death awhile, until
> Of many thousand kisses the poor last
> I lay upon thy lips.

I have given a little more space to Antony's character than becomes the purpose of these articles because Shakespeare never revealed the intense desire that burned in him throughout his whole mature life so completely as in this Antony. But the Roman general's armour does not suit Shakespeare, and so his very last words, though true enough to the Roman Antony, are not true to the poet :

> . . . . . .
> I lived the greatest prince o' the world
> The noblest, and do now not basely die,
> Not cowardly put off my helmet to
> My countryman, a Roman by a Roman
> Valiantly vanquished. Now my spirit is going ;
> I can no more.

Shakespeare himself is not satisfied with this summing up : he puts the true word for himself as the supreme creative artist in the mouth of Cæsar's friend Agrippa :

> . . . A rarer spirit never
> Did steer humanity : but you, gods, will give us
> Some faults to make us men. . . .

But if Shakespeare is not perfectly at home in the stiff armour of the Roman general, if his passion is too poetic, his

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generosities and nobilities too unlimited and too lavish, his superb mistress Mary Fitton finds at length in Cleopatra a part that suits her to perfection. All great craftsmen are helped now and then by chance or by the hap of lucky hours to some masterpiece beyond their imagining. More than any other artist, partly by reason of his ever-welling sympathy, partly because of his tireless industry, Shakespeare was blessed with these favours of fitful fortune. We have seen in *Romeo and Juliet* how his weaknesses were complemented by the realistic features supplied to him by his forerunner Brooke in the portrait of the garrulous venal old Nurse; so here his desire to strip and flay his mistress as he did in Cressida is complemented by the fact that Cleopatra did at length rise to unselfish greatness, and take her own life. She may have killed herself out of pride to avoid being dragged as a show in Cæsar's triumph or out of love for Antony, or both motives may have swayed her; but she did commit self-murder and that redeems her for us, lends her that soul of greatness if not of goodness which makes us forgive the wanton blood because of the immortal longings which lifted her to tragic heights.

I have analysed Cleopatra's character carefully and fully in my book *The Man Shakespeare;* yet the character-painting is so rich that I am delighted to show the extraordinary picture again in a new and perhaps a more favourable light.

Two groups of qualities in Mary Fitton seem to have struck Shakespeare almost from the beginning; her cunning pretence of restraint gilding utter wantonness, and her dominant personality armed with quick wit and quicker temper. While giving all these peculiar qualities to her in all his better portraits he usually lays stress upon the one set rather than the other. For instance, in Rosaline in *Love's Labour's Lost* he brings out her cool aloofness and wantonness and wit: in Cressida we have a more intense Rosaline: her faithlessness is shown to us in act; she confesses that her coldness is only a pretence used to quicken the desires of her lover. On the other hand, in the "dark lady" of the sonnets Shakespeare has emphasised the domineering strength of his mistress's personality; vices in her become beauties, he tells us; and in Cleopatra this strength of per-

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sonality is insisted upon again and complicated with cajoleries and quick wit and hot temper. This magic of personality and high-spirited witty boldness were clearly the qualities Shakespeare most admired in his mistress, just as the cunning wiles and wantonness were the "foul faults" he raves against in both sonnets and plays. When he wrote *Troilus and Cressida*, there had been a rebirth of passion between them and probably a new betrayal. Before he wrote *Antony and Cleopatra* he had enjoyed an Indian summer of delight. For one peculiarity of Shakespeare seems to be that working as he did with extraordinary constancy his experiences of every year or even of every month tinged and coloured his art. His plays and poems thus become documents of a singular and intimate self-revealing—windows, so to speak, through which we can follow his life.

The very first scene of *Antony and Cleopatra* shows that his love is happy and in full flood. As his continual disappointments have embittered him he needs happiness in order to give us at all a fair picture of his mistress; even at his best now he is likely to err by making the shadows too heavy. The joy in the play then is a good omen. At the very beginning Cleopatra teases him jealously; messengers from Rome are announced, and she cries, "Fulvia perchance is angry," or "Young Cæsar may have sent his 'powerful mandate' to you." Antony will not listen but strikes the key-note which we hear again at the end of the drama; he and his love are a pair without peer in the world; of that at least Shakespeare was certain.

"Stirr'd by Cleopatra" with jibes and jealousy Antony will give himself to "love of Love and her soft hours."

But Cleopatra taunts him:

> Hear the ambassadors.

He replies:

> . . . Fie, wrangling queen!
> Whom everything becomes, to chide, to laugh,
> To weep, whose every passion fully strives
> To make itself, in thee, fair and admired!

Shakespeare used precisely the same words to his "dark lady" of the sonnets, in Sonnet 150:

> Whence hast thou this becoming of things ill
> That in the very refuse of thy deeds

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> There is such strength and warranties of skill
> That in my mind, thy worst all best exceeds ? . . .

As if to impress the strange fact upon us Enobarbus sings of Cleopatra to the same tune :

> . . . vilest things
> Become themselves in her. . . .

Her jealousy is again wonderfully rendered.

Fulvia's death is announced, and Antony is resolved as Shakespeare no doubt resolved a thousand times :

> I must from this enchanting queen break off :
> Ten thousand harms, more than the ills I know,
> My idleness doth hatch. . . .

But Enobarbus tells him that :

> Cleopatra, catching but the least noise of this, dies instantly :
> I have seen her die twenty times upon far poorer moment. . . .
> ANT. She is cunning past man's thought.

Enobarbus will not have it. He sees more clearly : I call him the conscience of the play, the embodiment of Shakespeare's judgment. He says :

> Alack, sir, no ; her passions are made of nothing but the finest
> part of pure love : . . .
> ANT. Would I had never seen her ! . . .

But Shakespeare's impartial intellect will not accept that lame and ill-tempered conclusion. Enobarbus replies :

> O, sir, you had then left unseen a wonderful piece of work ;
> which not to have been blest withal would have discredited
> your travel.

Cleopatra paints herself again for us to the life in the next scene : her thought is all of Antony :

> CLEO. Where is he ?
> CHAR. I did not see him since.
> CLEO. See where he is, who's with him, what he does :
> I did not send you : if you find him sad,
> Say I am dancing ; if in mirth, report
> That I am sudden sick : quick and return.

She is a feather tossed on the wind of passion. She teases, jibes, and is jealous—all from intense love. When she sees that Antony intends to leave her, she changes at once to tender flattery and good wishes ; for she is intent on winning him back again :

> And all the gods go with you ! upon your sword
> Sit laurel victory ! . . .

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Even when he is absent her thoughts are all of him. The scene with the eunuch, Mardian, is a masterpiece incomparable —a perfect cameo.

She goes on to quarrel with Charmian for comparing Cæsar with Antony, her "man of men." She only loved Cæsar in :

> My salad days,
> When I was green in judgment : cold in blood . . .

She feeds herself with thoughts of Antony, as "with most delicious poison."

In her :

> . . . witchcraft joins with beauty, lust with both ! . . .

In this first act Cleopatra is already painted to the life with such ease, mastery, and consummate *brio*, as no other dramatist or even novelist has ever displayed. Shakespeare has been in love with Mary Fitton for years. She has got into his blood, and he cannot but paint her for us in act after act, in a dozen different attitudes.

Even Shakespeare's intellectual conscience Enobarbus cannot control himself when he speaks of her :

> I saw her once
> Hop forty paces through the public street ;
> And having lost her breath, she spoke, and panted
> That she did make defect perfection
> And, breathless, power breathe forth.

This incident seems to me a veritable performance of Mary Fitton reported by Shakespeare. It must have made a deathless impression on him. Not only does it throw Enobarbus off his perfect balance ; but it is in itself too peculiar to be imagined and is besides not at all in keeping with the character of the sensual queen. It reminds us too directly of the bold sonnet-heroine. That insistence upon "power" strikes the same note as in Sonnet 150 :

> O from what power hast thou this powerful might . . . ?

In the fifth scene of the second act Cleopatra is painted for us again to the finger-tips. She begins by asking for music :

> . . . moody food,
> Of us that trade in love. . . .

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Then come memories of Antony :

> I laugh'd him out of patience ; and that night
> I laugh'd him into patience ; and next morn
> Ere the ninth hour, I drank him to his bed ;
> Then put my tires and mantle on him, whilst
> I wore his sword Philippan. . . .

That any woman could drink Antony to bed would astonish us, but Shakespeare we know had "very poor and unhappy brains for drinking." Still the dressing up of Antony, while soft Cleopatra struts about with a sword, realises the whole scene for us to admiration.

A messenger comes from Italy, and she cries with astounding sensuality :

> Ram thou thy fruitful tidings in my ears,
> That long time hath been barren.

If good news there is gold for him :

> . . . and here
> My bluest veins to kiss . . .

The woman-temptress to perfection. But she is apprehensive and has a mind to strike him ere he speaks. When she hears that Antony is married, she is lost in violence : she strikes the messenger and hales him up and down the room by the hair, will kill him. Then the revulsion of the high-bred woman :

> These hands do lack nobility, that they strike
> A meaner than myself. . . .

She must know "the feature of Octavia . . . her years . . . her inclination . . . the colour of her hair" and in especial "how tall she is." Was there ever such portrait-painting ! Every touch in place and finished like a miniature. The image is so precise that Shakespeare's mistress moves across the canvas before our eyes.

The important feature is repeated. In the next scene, an act later, Cleopatra is introduced with the messenger again, and the first question is :

> Cleo. Is she as tall as me ?
> Mes. She is not, madam ;

but the messenger says "she is low-voiced." Cleopatra admits "that's not so good," but immediately turns the man's praise

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to blame. To her Octavia is "dull of tongue and dwarfish." When she hears that her rival's face is "round even to faultiness," she decides that

> For the most part, too, they are foolish that are so.
> Her hair what colour?
> Mrs. Brown, madam; and her forehead
> As low as she would wish it.

At once she gives him gold, finds him

> most fit for business.

Here, as in another far earlier portrait, we learn that Mary Fitton's forehead was high and her face rather oval than round.

Then comes the catastrophe. Enobarbus will have Antony fight on land, but Cleopatra wants him to fight on sea:

> I have sixty sails, Cæsar none better.

In the fight she flies; he follows and

> The greater cantle of the world is lost.

Of course she begs pardon of Antony and gets it.

Then comes the scene in which she gives her hand to Thyreus, Cæsar's messenger, to kiss: tell Cæsar, she says,

> . . . I am prompt,
> To lay my crown at's feet, and there to kneel . . .

This is, as I have said elsewhere, somewhat out of tune with the play and unnecessary. It is true to Cressida, no doubt; true to Shakespeare's mistress, probably, but not true to Cleopatra. Cleopatra does not trust herself to Cæsar, but to death. It is unnecessary too, because Shakespeare is going to reveal all her worst to us in the scene with her treasurer when he proves that she has concealed the greater part of her wealth.

It is, as I have said, the historical fact that Cleopatra kills herself, which forces Shakespeare to do justice to his splendid mistress. Antony may curse her as a "triple-turn'd whore," who

> . . . at fast and loose,
> Beguiled me to the very heart of loss.

But it is not true. She is merely a very sensuous woman who at the crisis loses nerve and fear-driven flies to the tower as she fled from Actium. But Antony is all the world to her, and when

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he dies she declares, or Shakespeare with a contemptuous allusion to Herbert declares—for no woman and especially no old wanton feels contempt of youth :

> . . . young boys and girls
> Are level now with men ; the odds is gone,
> And there is nothing left remarkable
> Beneath the visiting moon.

The last scenes are the finest of all. She says to Iras :

> My desolation does begin to make
> A better life . . .

This great artist in duplicity is not to be cheated : she distrusts Cæsar :

> . . . girls, he words me, that I should not
> Be noble to myself : . . .

She will not grace his triumph, nor be "chastised with the sober eye of dull Octavia . . ." she has "immortal longings" in her and at the supreme hour the high temper of Shakespeare's mistress breaks into mocking : she wants to hear the asp "call great Cæsar, ass unpolicied !"

Aristotle has been greatly praised because in his "Poetics" he tells us how the pity and fear of a great tragedy should always lead to a "katharsis" or purification, or perhaps the better phrase would be to something consoling—a reconciliation. Aristotle drew his theories from Sophocles, and Shakespeare with a still finer sense of fitness than the Greek poet recognised the same necessity. He always gives to his favourite characters some final word of appreciation, which may reconcile us to some extent to their unhappy fate. Hamlet at the end is called a "noble heart"; Brutus was "the noblest Roman of them all"; Othello was "great of heart," and so now at the end I look for the supreme word about Cleopatra-Fitton. I confess I have in mind that "modern grace" which even the bitter Bertram-Herbert admitted in her; and I am delighted to find that Shakespeare has given the self-same word to the cold Cæsar. He says :

> . . . she looks like sleep
> As she would catch another Antony,
> In her strong toil of grace.

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It is Cæsar again who pronounces the supreme valediction upon the lovers in which Antony's words at the beginning of the drama are re-echoed :

> No grave upon the earth shall clip in it
> A pair so famous . . .

What a pity it is that Shakespeare and Mary Fitton do not sleep together!

In this picture of Cleopatra we have by far the finest and most complex portrait of Shakespeare's mistress ; we even learn some new physical features from it ; she was tall with a high forehead, and oval rather than round face. Lofty stature suits the superb gipsy-wanton with her white skin and pitch-black eyes and hair. Two or three mental traits, too, are here given her that are omitted or only suggested in the other character sketches. In spite of the " siren tears " we read about in the sonnets, in the dramatic presentations Shakespeare's mistress does not weep ; but here she uses that weakness ; she goes further, she even dies frequently, Enobarbus says, in order to subdue her lover : no wonder Antony-Shakespeare declares " she's cunning past man's thought." Here, too, her passionate love is displayed while her wantonness is almost left out of sight : on the other hand, her high courage and contempt of death are as an aureole to her—a most astonishing, veracious, gaudy portrait I call it, the finest beyond comparison in all literature, worthy to stand with Hamlet and with Falstaff for ever. So much his passionate love did for Shakespeare and for us.

(To be continued)

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The Portrait of a Child

By Hilaire Belloc

In a garden which must, I think, lie somewhere apart and enclosed in one of the valleys of central England, you came across the English grass in summer beneath the shade of a tree; you were running, but your arms were stretched before you in a sort of dance and balance as though you rather belonged to the air and to the growing things about you and above you than to the earth over which you passed; and you were not three years old.

As, in jest, this charming vision was recorded by a camera which some guest had with him, a happy accident (designed, for all we know, by whatever powers arrange such things: an accident of the instrument or of the plate upon which your small, happy, advancing figure was recorded) so chanced that your figure, when the picture was printed, shone all around with light.

I cannot, as I look at it now before me and as I write these words, express, however much I may seek for expression, how great a meaning underlies that accident, nor how full of fate and of reason and of suggested truth that aureole grows as I gaze. Your innocence is beatified by it and takes on with majesty the glory which lies behind all innocence, but which our eyes can never see. Your happiness seems in that mist of light to be absolute and permanent; the common world in which you are moving passes, through this trick of the lens, into a stronger world more apt for such a sight, and one in which I am half persuaded (as I still look upon the picture) blessedness is not a rare adventure but something native and secure.

Little child, the trick which the camera has played means more and more as I still watch your picture, for there is present

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in that light not only blessedness but holiness as well. The lightness of your movement and of your poise (as though you were blown like a blossom along the tops of the grass) is shone through, and your face, especially its ready and wondering laughter, is inspired, as though the Light had filled it from within; so that, looking thus, I look not on but through. I say that in this portrait which I treasure there is not only blessedness but holiness as well; Holiness which is the cause of Blessedness and which contains it, and by which secretly all this world is sustained.

Now there is a third thing in your portrait, little child. That accident of light, light all about you and shining through your face, is not only blessed nor only holy, but it is also sacred; and with that thought there returns to me as I look what always should return to the mind of a man if he is to find any stuff or profit in his consideration of divine things. In blessedness there is joy for which here we are not made, so that we catch it only in glimpses or in adumbrations. And in holiness, when we perceive it, we perceive something far off: it is that from which we came and to which we should return, yet holiness is not a human thing! But things sacred—things set to a religious purpose, things about which there lies an awful necessity of sacrifice, things devoted and necessarily suffering some doom—those are certainly of this world: that indeed all men know well at last, and find it part of the business through which they needs must pass. Human memories, since they are only memories; human attachments, since they are offered up and end; great human fears and hopeless human longings—these are sacred things, attached to a victim and to a sacrifice; and in this picture of yours, with the light so glorifying you all round, no one can doubt who sees it but that the sacredness of human life will be yours also; that is, you must learn how it is offered up to some end and what a sacrifice is there.

I could wish, as I consider this, that the camera had played no such trick, and had not revealed in that haze of awful meaning all that lies beyond the nature of you, child. But it is a truth which is so revealed; and we may not, upon a penalty more

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terrible than death, neglect any ultimate truth concerning our mortal way.

Your feet, which now do not seem to press upon the lawn across which they run, have to go more miles than you can dream of, through more places than you could bear to hear, and they must be directed to a goal which will not yet in your very young delight be mentioned before you, or of which, if it is mentioned, you will not understand the name; and your little hands, which you bear before you with the light gesture of flying things, will grasp most tightly that which can least remain, and will attempt to fashion what can never be completed, and will caress that which will not respond to the caress. Your eyes, which are now so principally filled with innocence that that bright quality drowns all the rest, will look upon so much of deadly suffering and of misuse in men that they will very early change themselves in kind; and all your face, which now vaguely remembers nothing but the early vision from which childhood proceeds, will grow drawn and self-guarded and will suffer some agonies, a few despairs, innumerable fatigues, until it has become the face of a woman grown. Nor will this sacred doom about you, which is that of all mankind, cease or grow less or be mitigated in any way; it will increase as surely and as steadily as increase the number of the years, until at last you will lay down the daylight and the knowledge of day-lit things as gladly as now you wake from sleep to see them.

For you are sacred; and all those elders about you, whose solemn demeanour now and then startles you into a pretty perplexity which soon calls back their smiles, have hearts only quite different from your quite careless heart, because they have known the things to which, in the manner of victims, they are consecrated.

All that by which we painfully may earn rectitude and a proper balance in the conduct of our short affairs, I must believe that you will practise; and I must believe, as I look here into your face, seeing your confident advance (as though you were flying out from your babyhood into young life without any fear), that the virtues which now surround you in a crowd and make a sort of court for you and are your angels every way, will go

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along with you and will stand by you to the end. Even so, and the more so, you will find (if you read this some years hence) how truly it is written. By contrast with your high demeanour, with your immortal hopes and with your pious efforts, the world about you will seem darker and less secure with every passing harvest; and in proportion as you remember the childhood which has led me so to write of you, in proportion as you remember gladness and innocence with its completed joy, in that proportion will you find at last a breaking burden in the weight of this sad earth.

Now you may say to me, little child (not now but later on), to what purpose is all this complaint, and why should I tell you these things?

It is because in the portrait before me the holiness, the blessedness, and therefore the sacredness, are apparent that I am writing as I do. For you must know that there are two gates by which those who fear to fulfil their destiny think they can fly from it; there are two avenues of escape from sacredness and a seeming relief from the rack of human affairs, and the one way out or the other is taken by many: since you are sacred, do not take either but bear the burden. It is the character of whatever is sacred that it does not seek evasion, but, like a true victim, remains to the end, ready to complete the sacrifice. And this sacrifice if for some a daily duty, for others an exalted mission, for others one single dreadful loss in one unhappy hour —but for all a heavy price to be paid for the end and the perfection of our being.

The first way out is to forget that one is sacred, and this men and women do by way of treason. They betray. They break at first uneasily, later easily, and at last unconsciously, the pledge which each of us gave once before he was born, in Paradise. All men and all women are conscious of that contract, for though their lips cannot frame it here, and though the terms of the pledge are forgotten, the memory of its obligation fills the mind. But there comes a day, and that soon in the lives of many, when to break it once is to be much refreshed and to seem to drop the burden; and in the second and the third time it is done and the fourth it is done more easily—until at last there

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is no more need for a man or a woman to break that pledged word again and once again ; it is broken for good and all. This is one most common way in which the sacred quality is lost : the way of treason. Round about such as choose this kind of relief grows a habit and an air of treason. They betray all things at last, and even common friendship is at last no longer theirs. The end of this false issue is despair.

The second way is to take refuge from ourselves in pleasures, and this is easily done, not by the worse but by the better sort ; for there are some, some few, who would never betray nor break their ancient word, but who, seeing no meaning in a sacrifice nor in a burden, escape from it through pleasure as through a drug, and this pleasure they find in all manner of things, and always that spirit near them which would destroy their sacred mark persuades them that they are right and that in such pursuits the sacrifice is evaded. So some will steep themselves in rhyme, some in landscapes, some in pictures, some in the watching of the complexity and change of things ; some in music, some in action, some in mere ease. It seems as though the men and women who would thus forget their sacredness are better loved and better warned than those who take the other path, for they never forget certain gracious things which should be proper to the mind, nor do they lose their friends. But that they have taken a wrong path you may easily perceive from this sign : that these pleasures, like any other drug, do not feed or satisfy, but must be increased with every dose, and, even so, soon pall ; they are continued, not because they are pleasures any longer, but because, dull though they have become, without them there is active pain.

Take neither the one path nor the other, but retain, I beseech you, when the time comes, that quality of sacredness of which I speak, for there is no alternative. Some trouble fell upon our race, and all of us must take upon ourselves the business and the burden. If you will attempt any way out at all, it will but lead you to some worse thing. We have not all choices before us, but only very few, and each of those few choices is mortal, and all but one is evil.

You should remember this also, dear little child, that at the

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beginning—oh, only at the very beginning of life—even your reason that God gave may lead you wrong. For with those memories strong upon you of perfect will, of clear intelligence, and of harmonious beauty all about, you will believe the world in which you stand to be the world from which you have come and to which you are also destined to return. You have but to treat this world for but a very little while as though it were the thing you think it is to find it is not so.

Do you know that that which smells most strongly in this life of immortality, and which a poet has called "the ultimate outpost of eternity," is insecure and perishes? I mean the passionate affection of early youth. If that does not remain, what then do you think can remain? I tell you that nothing which you take to be permanent round about you when you are very young is more than the symbol or clothes of permanence. Another poet has written, speaking of the chalk hills:

> Only a little while remain
> The Downs in their solemnity.

Nor is this saying forced: men and women cannot attach themelves even to the hills where they first played.

Some men, wise but unillumined, and not conscious of that light which I here physically see shining all round and through you in the picture which is before my eyes as I write, have said that to die young and to end the business early was a great blessing. We do not know. But we do know that to die long after and to have gone through the business must be blessed, since blessedness and holiness and sacredness are bound together in one.

But, of these three, be certain that sacredness is your chief business; blessedness after your first childhood you will never know, and holiness you may only see as men see distant mountains lifted beyond a plain—it cannot be your habitation. Sacredness, which is the stamp of that purpose whose ultimate air is blessedness, whose end is holiness, will be upon you until you die; maintain that impress, cherish it and let it be your chief concern, for, though you neglect it, it will remain and will avenge itself.

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All this I have seen in your picture as you go across the grass, and it was an accident of the camera that did it. If any one shall say that these things do not attach to the portrait of a child, let him ask himself whether they do not attach to the portrait that might be drawn, did human skill suffice, of the life of a woman or a man, and whether the awful life of a man does not set out from the undisturbed securities of childhood; or let him ask himself whether, if a face in old age and that same face in childhood were equally and as by a revelation set down each in its full truth, and the growth of the one into the other were interpreted by a profound intelligence, what I have said would not be true of all that little passage of ours through the daylight.

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The Handling of Words

Hewlett

By Vernon Lee

Richard Yea and Nay, p. 8. Five hundred words taken at random. Nouns and pronouns 132. Verbs, exclusive of auxiliaries, 56; adjectives and adverbs, 54.

"In Paris Richard repaired to the tower of his kinsman, the Count of Angoulesme, but his brother to the Abbey of St. Germain. The Poictevin herald bore word to King Philip Augustus on Richard's part; Prince John as I suppose bore his own word whither he had most need for it to go. It is believed that he contrived to see Madame Alois in private; and if that great purple cape that held him in talk for nearly an hour by a windy corner of the Pré-aux-Clercs did not cover the back of Montferrat, then gossip is a liar. Richard, for his part, took no account of John and his shifts; a wave of disgust for the creeping youth had filled the stronger man, and, having got him into Paris, there seemed nothing better to do with him than to let him alone. But that sensitive gorge of Richard's was one of his worst enemies; if he did not mean to hold the snake in the stick he had better not have cleft the stick. As for John and his writhing, I am only half concerned with them; but let me tell you this. Whatever he did, or did not, sprang, not from hatred of this or that man, but from fear or from love of his own belly. Every prince of the House of Anjou loved inordinately some member of himself, some a noble member nobly, and others basely a base member. If John loved his belly, Richard loved his royal head: but enough. To be done with all this, Richard was summoned to the French King hot-foot, within a day or two of his coming; went immediately

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with his Chaplain Anselm and other one or two, and was immediately received. He had, in fact, obeyed in such haste that he found two in the audience chamber instead of one. With Philip of France was Conrad of Montferrat, a large, full, ruminating Italian full of bluster and thick blood. The French King was a youth just the age of Jehane, of the thin, sharp, black-and-white mould into which had run the dregs of Capet. He was smooth-faced like a girl, and had no need to shave; his lips were very thin, set crooked in his face. So far as he was boy he loved and admired Richard; so far as he was Capet he distrusted him with all the rest of the world. Richard knelt to his suzerain and was by him caught up and kissed; Philip made him sit at his side on the throne. This put Montferrat sadly out of countenance, for he considered himself, as perhaps he was, the superior of any man uncrowned. It seems that some news had drifted in on the west wind. 'Richard, oh Richard,' the King began, half whimsical, half vexed, what have you been doing in Touraine?' 'Fair Sir,' answered Richard," &c. . . .

One has, at the outset of this quotation, the impression of being presented with a very straight narrative and little else. Taken superficially one might skip certain words, and read it thus: "In Paris Richard repaired to the tower of his kinsman, the Count of Angoulesme . . . his brother to the Abbey of St. Germain. The Poictevin herald bore word to King Philip Augustus on Richard's part; Prince John . . . bore his own word whither he most needed it to go." The words I have omitted are only five, and not important ones; and it is only on continuing the page as it really stands that one feels these words *have been there*, and that they have acted, what we call "unconsciously," in such a way as to convey a gesture, an intonation, wholly different from that of my altered version. The *but* turns the mere consecutive account of where the King and his brother respectively lodged into the beginning of a comparison of their respective proceedings.

After the straight statement about the herald's carrying Richard's news comes a statement, at first not much more complex, to the effect that "John bore his own word whither he had most need for it to go." This might mean simply that

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the author is not concerned with John, had the reader not been invited by the continuous symmetry (Richard does this, John that, Richard's message on the right, John's on the left) to a constant comparison, accentuated by that *but;* we understand that if Hewlett does not specify to whom John sent word of his coming, that "whither he had most need for it to go," it is not a passing over John's proceedings as unimportant, but a pointing at them as suspicious. It is not "I know that Richard sent the Herald and to whom; it doesn't matter what John did." It is "Richard acted openly and officially, with the perfunctoriness, perhaps, of official proceedings; John in secret, and in secret because he was up to something. This suspicion is thrown on to John with redoubled strength by slipping in the "I suppose." It is Don Basilio's "Ah del paggio quel ch'ho detto era solo un mio sospetto." It is stronger than a direct statement, by the impact of all the author's untold reasons; we are in the presence of a man with facts up his sleeve and who has thought it out; hence we are unable to disregard. After this we are quite prepared for the "it is believed that he contrived to see Madame Alois in private"—the belief, treated apparently as a mere *on-dit*, converging apparently with the suspicions of the author. It is not only Hewlett who suspected John, but the public at large. After this comes a statement which does not surprise us, that John had a more or less masked meeting with Montferrat; a statement put in form of supposition—"and if that great purple cape that held him in talk . . . did not cover the back of Montferrat"—which makes it, by passing, so to speak, through our own and the writer's judgment, infinitely more cogent: it is a logical necessity, not a mere observed fact, capable of misinterpretation. And it is closed by the author openly taking sides, calling additional witnesses: "then gossip is a liar." In fact this, which had looked like a plain narrative, is in reality a lawyer's summing-up, a lawyer's putting things in his light, an accusation. John is condemned in our opinion, and we are quite prepared to find that Richard long judged and condemned him; moreover, that our future dealings with him will be as with such a condemned person. In the sentence following—"Richard, for his part, took no account

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of John and his shifts; a wave of disgust," &c.—we leave the apparently objective narrative, the "for his part" making us look at things from Richard's point of view. And now let me leave for a moment the minute analysis of this page to make an observation which adds to its interest. Reading Hewlett's more recent novel, the *Queen's Quair*, I felt more and more, as I expressed it to myself, that Hewlett had somehow applied to the Past and to a story of violent tragedy the methods invented by Henry James in his later books for the treatment of the tea-cup storms taking place in well-bred and pacific souls. This impression, which I had not leisure to analyse, was due, so far as I could guess, to the manner in which the items were thrown down before the reader in apparent confusion, until, with his help, they slowly grouped themselves into certainties far more compact and cogent, far more difficult to shirk, than those conveyed by any clear and straightforward narrative. The reader, to paraphrase the other James (William, the psychologist) was bombarded with impressions out of which he had to make something intelligible. Make it, but how? Can mere pelting with random facts force upon the reader an overwhelming sense of coherence? Surely not. I have not the *Queen's Quair* by me; but the explanation of the point is furnished, I think, by *Richard Yea and Nay*. I had remembered this book as a strange mixture of the heroic and the extremely intimate, the subject making it different in my recollection from the *Queen's Quair*. But now, on looking at this page, I see that instead of a narrative we have a discussion of motives, neither more nor less than in Henry James, and a discussion of motives (also as in Henry James) from the point of view of one person (at least at the time). Now, applying this fact to the question, "Why should bombarding with random impressions as in the *Queen's Quair* and the *Ambassadors* result in leaving the reader, after a period of utter confusion, with cogent convictions, especially the conviction *that things had to be like that*," I come to the conclusion that this element of cogency must be due to the perpetual enlisting of the reader's logical sense. It is all those sentences of comparison: "A, on the one hand, B on the other, Richard, &c. &c., but John, &c. &c.," which set

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the reader comparing, measuring, weighing. And it is those "I suppose"—"it is believed"—those references to gossip which set the reader supposing, believing, and sifting gossip. Otherwise stated, the depth of the reader's conviction comes from the logical activity forced on him. For logic has the imperative in belief, the *must*. Hence we see *what must be* (*i.e.*, what we have ourselves calculated and foreseen) far more intimately and cogently than *what merely is*. Hewlett and Henry James both catch us in the meshes of the writer's and the various personages' views, which become our own by our effort to follow them; whereas writers like Meredith and Kipling pass their magic-lantern figures on the blank sheet of our fancy. For, paradoxical though it may sound, to think a thing out is to live it out; to stretch our real attention parallel to those dead facts, to clasp them with our living thoughts, and thereby make them ours, for our thought of a situation is ourself; while the mere situation itself is—well, no situation at all, a mere bodiless phantom.

Hence (odd as it appears) there is a fundamental resemblance between Henry James and Hewlett; the resemblance revealed as by some graphological detail, by those words "but"—"then"—"if"—"on his part"—those forms "I suppose"—"it is believed"—which mean that the situation is an inner, not an outer, one. The play of interest in both cases is in the attitude of the various persons towards one another, not in the "actions" which reveal or suggest that attitude; both novelists are subjective and logical and judicial. Henry James is the judge studying the case quite impartially; Hewlett the advocate preparing a very partial special pleading. Both say to the reader, not "Look what happened"—but "Think what must have happened"—and the *what has happened* (or rather, what we judge must have happened) has value, not in itself, as a source of further, outer happenings, but rather as producing certain inner conditions of the *dramatis personæ*. The murder of Rizzio is not interesting in itself, but in the added fear and hatred in the soul of Queen Mary, just as the incident at the river-side inn is not interesting in itself, but in the altered conception of Chad and Madame de Vionnet which it brings

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about in Strether's mind. The drama, I repeat, is in both cases an inner one. But now comes the difference. The drama, with Henry James, is in an intellectual and moral condition. It is a question of what Strether thinks, judges, how he approves or disapproves; and the emotion in him is one of surprise, suspicion, or disappointment at a change in his valuation: 'tis a question of how good or how bad he *thinks* Chad, a contemplative interest. In Hewlett there is the most extraordinary contrast to this; and now I come to one of Hewlett's singularities. Let me try and insinuate my idea by examples. In these five hundred words, selected quite at random, we have five references to bodily peculiarities. John is a "creeping youth"—Richard "the stronger man"—John is "writhing"—Montferrat is "large, pale, ruminating, full of bluster and thick blood." The King of France "thin, sharp, of the black-and-white mould into which the dregs of Capet had run." Remark that the adjectives, so sparse with Hewlett, follow on each other thick when it is a question of what I must call physiological peculiarities. And the first of the earlier passage is to tell us of a "wave of disgust for the creeping youth"—and of Richard's "sensitive gorge"—which was his worst enemy. And the core of it all is in the remark, "Every prince of the House of Anjou loved inordinately some member of himself, some a noble member nobly, and others basely a base member. If John loved his belly, Richard loved his royal head." This summing-up is the more striking, that however natural it may be to think of the *creeping*, *writhing* John as "loving his belly," the *contents* of the head, a man's thoughts, standards, will, &c., are so bodiless that we rarely think of them as being his *head;* so that this forcing of spiritual things into bodily terms is indicative of a very strong bias on the author's part to feel and think with reference to bodily temperament. Now this is what differentiates Hewlett's subjectivism from that of Henry James, and indeed of any other writer I know, not excepting even Michelet. Hewlett's personages exist towards one another, not as human beings whose temperamental difference culminates, thanks to intellectual activity, in an intelligible form, but rather as creatures in whom the element of thought and purpose is but the fitful result of

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their physiological constitution, and who exist towards each other with the rare and obscure attractions which animals may feel, and the constant, deep, mysterious, blind, dumb hostilities of their animal nature. I know, of course, that at the bottom of all our feelings, thought and action is the deep-seated mystery of temperament, are the sympathies of flesh and blood, the incompatibilities of nerve and muscle, the purely bodily selection of prey, of mate, of enemy. But in the ordinary human being all this appears in consciousness as something different, transformed for the benefit of reason into reasonable motives and judgments; and we are unconscious of the temperament making us love and hate, even as the man in health is unconscious of the viscera, thanks to which he lives, and of the muscles, thanks to which he moves; the clear, precise facts of intellectual consciousness driving the bulky, vague knowledge of our fleshly constitution into the background.

But Hewlett's personages are different. Of them we must repeat that "they loved inordinately some member of themselves—"; or rather, let me alter the formula, loved, not "some member"—but "*with* some member of themselves; loved some *with* a noble member nobly, or with a base member basely." Certain it is that we are always made to feel the bodily phenomenon at the bottom of all their emotions. Thus, in the passage which I have paraphrased, we are told of Richard's worst enemy, his *wave of disgust*, his *sensitive gorge;* likewise that John was a thing not merely *loving his belly*, but using it to move with "creeping, writhing"—a belly mainly. Moreover, that Montferrat was not merely blustering, but "full of thick blood"—and "ruminating"; that the King of France was a half-degenerate, almost sexless creature, a child when he should have been a man, and with a child's calf-love for this *strong* Richard of the ready disgusts. Nay, even in the mode of address of Philip to Cœur de Lion there is an odd bodily tremulousness given by the placing of the interjection "Richard, oh Richard"—which is the beginning of a sob, as distinguished from "O Richard, Richard"—which in English is the usual manner of conveying reproach. Temperaments conscious to themselves and to one another. That is the formula of Hewlett's

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personages; stirring of blood and viscera, shrinkings of skin and muscle directly conveyed to the creature's mind and to the reader's; the garment, nay, rather the outer skin of thought, motive, habit, stripped away; and the creatures moving, through an odd penumbra, in the quivering nakedness of their physiological nature. When it is that of Richard, of the magnificent, solemn and magnanimous feline, we feel the uncanny animal movements as so much dignity and charm. And this, with the heroic surroundings the constant open air and open sea of *Richard Yea and Nay*, and the tragic tale of adventure and devotion, leaves an impression of exotic grandeur, a relief after our reasoning and talking modern world. But the work of the writer is the equation of his tendencies of treatment and of the subject he chooses to treat. And while in *Richard*, Hewlett gets the subject which corrects, checks, and purifies his tendencies; he gets the subject which intensifies them in the *Queen's Quair*. With Cœur de Lion we are safe on the untrodden peaks, in the rare atmosphere of the epic; watching the great lonely creatures who, in their simplicity and struggle, seem so much finer than our poor selves: the lion, the colossal stag, the eagle, creatures made noble by centuries of symbol. But with Queen Mary and her rout of wenches and pages and cut-throats, we come to obscure creatures whose inner workings move us to disgust even more than to tragic horror: and Hewlett's handling, magnificently efficacious, turns those tortuous and stuffy palaces of Valois times into the burrowing-places of mere human vermin. And it is just because we are made to understand so well the longings and the fears and rages of these murderers and these wantons that we cannot do with them; and that, instead of pathos or terror, we feel only the faintness of nausea. Feel it, at all events, *in remembering* the book. For here we come to a curious point in literature: that, according to the relative strength of various items, the relative impressiveness of subject and of manner of exhibition, we may recollect a book in a manner somewhat different from how we read it. The *Queen's Quair* did not raise in me as much disgust while reading as it now does in recollection, probably because while memory filters the general impression and allows it to act upon us as an essence, sometimes

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as a poison, we may, while reading, be kept in more healthy feeling by the activity elicited by the author's style, his mode of exhibition. For what we call *style*, arrangement of sentences, choice of words, balance of verbs and nouns, concordance of tenses, selection of terms provoking expectation, comparison, and so forth—the whole operation by which a meaning is conveyed means on the reader's part so much thinking, imagining, recollecting, anticipating, measuring, comparing—in fact, of so many various and complex ways of carrying his attention, of living (during that time) his intellectual life. *Style* implies a mode of activity more or less various and intricate, but always congruous, imposed by the writer on the reader, even like form in visible art, like melody and harmony in music. Now, Hewlett's style is eminently logical. The reader is bid to infer rather than to accept. He is ordered to put two and two together and draw conclusions. He is coerced by *while's* and *then's* into going only a certain distance along one line, in order to turn back and judge the distance compared to the previous one. He is obliged to pause and look round by *but's* and to start afresh by *and's;* to turn aside by *as for's;* to crane into the beyond by *if's* and *whatever's*. He is made to pull items together for himself simply by their being left unconnected. In fact, he is, this reader of Hewlett's, made to exert himself, to live actively and attentively. He is made to be highly intellectual and highly judicious while reading about deep-seated mysteries of temperament and unbridled impulses. He is made to live with his brain, indeed perhaps more literally than psychology as yet ventures to suggest, with his motor centres, while dealing with the *creeping belly* of John and the *thick blood* of Montferrat. Now such intellectual activity is comparatively rare; it is braced, balanced, and noble; and the writer who calls it forth, *because* he *possesses it himself*, is in so far, and whatever his subject, whatever the substances which stain and befoul his thoughts, *noble also*.

There is, I judge from occasional hints among writers, a vague idea that nobility, nay virility, of style is due to scarcity of adjectives and preponderance of verbs. This page of Hewlett may suggest to my reader, what it confirms to myself, that this

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question is not only far more complex, but that such qualities as nobility and virility are due rather to the variety and co-ordination of the verbal tenses, and to the cogency of the logical parts of speech; in fact to the degree of activity elicited from the reader, and the economy and efficacy thereof. Take, for instance, the beginning of the sentences to which I have been alluding; you will find that the initial word betokens an almost constant change in the direction of the thought, but a change of direction which is congruous—in other words, a good deal of varied but co-ordinated intellectual movement. Let us examine: "But that sensitive gorge of Richard's was one of his worst enemies," &c. *But* firmly deflects the attention, forces us to attend to something quite different, forces us to face round to another standpoint. *That* employed instead of *the* before "sensitive gorge" makes us look back on the foregoing, carry along one of its items with the *sense of the item having come out of the direction we have left*—"was one of his worst enemies"—a general statement, reminding us (a movement towards something already known) that Richard was surrounded by enemies—quite apart from his own peculiarities; and now, a very particular statement: "*If he did not mean to* hold the snake in the stick, *he had better not have* cleft the stick."—Moreover, a future combined with a *more than perfect past*, a looking forwards and a looking backwards, but not merely straight backwards as in the case of the perfect past, a looking across one past into a remoter, deeper down past. We have, in this concordance of tenses, two *planes* in time as well as two directions in subject. "As for John and his writhing, I am only half concerned," &c. Here a sudden, but perfectly intelligible and connected leap from the merely objective position "Richard and John were or had been"—to the subjective position of the writer; a change from a narrative of past and gone things to a pleading in the present. "But let me tell you this," &c.—and now we even are dragged in; we feel that the narrative is becoming a play within the play, or a picture inside a picture (like the Bible Histories of the Sistine Ceiling, framed in the architecture of Sybils, Prophets, and Genii). "Whatever he did or did not"—a general statement in symmetrical shape and with the

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extra cogency of the negative form (which often acts like a spring)—" sprang not from hatred but," &c. What a moving about of our attention, backwards, forwards, laterally, &c., in this sentence!

Look at the words which do the marshalling of our thought: '*But, if, not, not, this, that, but, from, or, from, own*"—all words telling us nothing save how *we are to think and feel in this matter.*

Again we get a general statement: " Every prince of the House of Anjou loved inordinately some member of himself," with a symmetrical division of attention, " some a noble member nobly, others basely a base member—"; the noble—nobly, basely—base, forming a couple to the right and a couple to the left, and accentuating the symmetrical arrangement. Then the sudden pulling up: " but enough." After which a rapid turning round to the general statement: " to be done with all this "—a present which is a future; and a plunge back into the smooth, straight current of past: " Richard was summoned to the French King," &c.

The next sentence, however, " he had, in fact, obeyed in such haste that he found two," &c., is a return to the explanatory mode: we are to attend to a *why*, not merely to a *how*. " With Philip was Conrad "—this plain statement of fact is tacked on to the preceding argument, just by reason of its isolation: in the frame of mind induced by the " in fact "—of the previous sentence, the reader, so to speak, stoops and picks up the isolated statement about Conrad, recognising in it, so detached and dropped, the thing he has been made to expect by that rather mysterious " he found two in the audience-chamber instead of one." The fact is not insisted on; it gains the more significance by the swift and secure transition to plainer statement of fact: " The French King was a youth . . . of the thin, sharp, black-and-white mould into which had run the dregs of Capet." Hewlett, it may be remarked, puts considerable trust in the nimbleness of his reader's wits. The first sentence gives us the race and the moment, tells us what to expect. In the light of the " dregs of Capet " remark, we see, without need of explanation, that the beardlessness, the crookedness of Philip's

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face are signs of degeneracy. The next sentence divides Philip in two, "so far as he was boy," &c.—"so far as he was Capet," and by this symmetrical placing of his two tendencies, we are prepared for his ambiguous treatment of Richard; ambiguous, but now intelligible to us. After all this preparation for the future we quietly return to the Past.

"Richard knelt," &c. Note the feeling given by the sudden change from active to passive. We might rewrite the sentence, keeping the contents thus, but altering the movement—"Richard knelt to his suzerain, and Philip caught and kissed him"—instead of "Richard knelt to his suzerain and *was* by him caught up and kissed," as Hewlett has it. Hewlett's version keeps Richard as the important person, the nominative of the passive as well as of the active. We have to look alive to understand what has happened; but we find Richard in the centre of the stage as before. Then, suddenly, Philip is the nominative, making Richard sit on the throne. This is necessary to change the movement and take our attention in the direction of Montferrat, who was standing. This sentence is splendidly inclusive of much past and future. "For he considered himself (as perhaps he was) the superior of any man uncrowned." So much tacked on to one small FOR, thanks to the steadying power of that parenthesis "(as perhaps he was)," which gives it a firm basis of pause. And then our interest is stirred by the sudden introduction of the narrator's opinion in "it seems that some news had drifted in on the west wind." Rewrite that sentence, "It happened that some news," &c.—and note the way in which the point gets lost by this alteration.

And with this I take leave of this magnificent piece of writing.

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An Englishman in Ireland

By R. A. Scott-James

I. ON THE LAGAN CANAL

It was nearly midday when we pushed off from the towing-path above the first lock on the Lagan Canal. In a few minutes we had passed a sharp twist in the channel, and a low, round hill hid the last of the houses from sight. The grass which grew thickly to the edge of the water was still wet with yesterday's rain, but though long grey clouds stretched like ribs across the sky, the air was dry and warm. You must not imagine thick, greasy water such as defiles many of the stagnant canal-ways of England. This water seemed clear as the sweetest of rivers, and its smooth surface mirrored the sky and the trees and the long grasses at the edge. Here and there water-lilies were in full bloom, and their broad leaves floated like delicate fans on the surface. The whole country seemed to be composed of steep, round hills unconnected by ridges, hills tossed at random over the country in small billows between which tortuous valleys ran in and out, ending abruptly in whimsical slopes. There could be no monotony in a scene which changed every few minutes. Now the literally emerald-green meadows would slope down from a tree-crested hill, and now the trees, ash and oak and willow and elm, would come to the very edge of the water and overhang its reflecting surface. Now the valley would open out to the right and expose a view of the Antrim mountains far off in the north and north-east; and the wood or the meadow would close in again, affording through the trees some glimpse of a grey, empty residence.

And as we passed on through a silence broken only by the dipping of our paddles in the water, the lowing of cattle, and rarely the pitiable August twittering of a bird, we became

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conscious of an almost uncanny solitude. It was but an hour or two since we had left the outskirts of Belfast; we were in a part of Ireland reputed to be the most prosperous—and surely it was prosperous—yet it seemed pervaded with an unaccountable desolation. It was not the desolation of the wilderness, such as afterwards impressed me in the mountains of Lough Allen or the dismantled hay-fields of the Shannon; it was the desolation as of a city suddenly abandoned. We passed cottages which had recently fallen into decay, and large, well-timbered parks enclosing untenanted mansions. Everything around us bore witness to the handiwork of men—the plantations, the standing hay, the hedges, the well-trimmed banks of the canal—yet men were not visible. One wondered whether the rich green land was really abandoned, or whether men hidden from our sight watched us silently as we passed.

From time to time, at the locks, we came upon little oases of habitation which only served to emphasise the solitude of the way. My companion had a theory that it was easier and quicker to lift boat and baggage ashore and carry them over the land which lay between the lower and the higher levels, rather than to pass through the lock-gates. At the first portage we were stopped by an old man, the solitary inhabitant of the place, who demanded to see our "pass." At the second, we hauled the canoe over wet grass without interruption, and as I was lowering baggage into our craft I looked up and saw on the opposite slope two dark-haired, bare-footed maidens laughing and waving their hands. We waved in response to these friendly dryads, and pushing our canoe through the water returned to the solitude. It was broken again by three little boys and two little girls who rushed gleefully to help in the transportation, and one of them ran with us for a mile along the towing-path and asked a hundred questions about our "wee boat."

And so on, and on, our well-founded waterway resisting by evasion the meaningless spasmodic efforts of the country to rise and fall, yet in the long run lifting itself at intervals according to the steady main gradient of the land. My companion and myself have now become accustomed to pulling harmoniously with the paddles. The canoe swings lightly with its frail,

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sensitive motion. We enter a valley where canal and grassy towing-path run together beneath a canopy of over-shadowing trees. The eye explores the distance, and nothing but the path and the reflecting water and the arch of trees is visible, new lines of the frondent canopy and new tints in the miniature world of green opening out, as we advance like disturbers of some ancient peace. Suddenly the sun breaks through, flooding the leaves with its illumination and casting silver light and chocolate shadows on the water. At the same moment, as if from the heart of the wood, comes the rhythmic sound of slow-moving hoofs and a voice trolling a song. We turn to the left with the bend of the canal, and high above us looms the stern of a barge, almost hiding the low-lying meadow beyond. The voice changes its tune, and we catch the lilt of the words "paddle your own canoe."

"You'll not be thinking of passing us?" says the man at the helm; and as we come alongside, "Ach, that's not fair."

"We didn't reckon on meeting the new *Dreadnought*," says my companion.

"We can't go as fast as your torpedo-boat," replies the man at the helm.

"Ship ahoy!" cries the man with the horse, as the nose of the canoe emerges on the farther side of the barge.

"It's only the mail express, you ninny," says the man at the helm.

In the distance above the trees rises the thin spire of Lisburn Cathedral. It is more than two miles off. A noise of machinery warns us that we are approaching inhabited places. A great square-built factory stands at the edge of the canal, and sends a turbid stream of its waste products to defile the channel. A pleasant lock-keeper sends us up into clearer water; we pass under a little round stone bridge; I disembark and, directed by half a dozen curious onlookers, cross the bridge and ascend the hill to the village of Lambeg, a collection of little white houses and one big house the story of which, graphically told to me, is not mine to repeat. At the inn I purchased bottles of stout, and thus laden returned to the canoe. On an island a hundred yards off we have a late luncheon.

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It would be unpropitious to dwell upon some of the strange, unforgettable scenes of the open air and the sunlight, or even the recollection of tobacco following the memorable grossness of food! The western light pouring through the trees and flooding the water with luminous ripples, unstirred by the wind, has an eloquence to which human speech is alien. The sensible and the ideal are human distinctions which have no counterpart in the inscrutable unity of Nature. Logic is put to flight and ar titself can hardly stand in the light of the sun-god. But

> See thou bring not to field or stone
> The fancies found in books.

So let us get on.

* * * * *

Lisburn turned out to receive us with a solemn, inquisitive, suspicious greeting. First of all we were espied by a few barefooted little boys. They ran along the banks keeping us company. Then when the grey and white houses appeared the folk came to their doors to stare at us. A number of young women joined the little boys, and hurried along towards the stone bridge which, we observed, was now thronged with a crowd looking at us, scrutinising us, devouring us, making a mental note, as it were, of every eccentric feature which might be taken as characteristic of us, of our boat, of our dress, perhaps of our hair, eyes, and feet. The canal had here become broad and stately, and our progress in mid-channel seemed to take the character of a solemn procession; no University crew on boat-race day was ever subjected to more searching criticism. I looked up as we passed under the grey bridge, and seemed to encounter a score of penetrating eyes. For a moment we were hidden, and from the cover of the bridge we ran into the *cul-de-sac* of a lock. It received us within its gates, closed upon us, and its high walls loomed up on either side.

It was just after the hour when the factories of Lisburn had closed, and the young women were returning from their work over the bridge when they were struck by the unfamiliar aspect of our craft. From the bridge they came hastening down to the side of the lock, crowding, pushing, leaning one over another in anxiety to catch sight of such odd fish as ourselves.

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Wherever we looked the large, dark, peering eyes met us and searched us from above as if some vast peacock hovered over us. Scores of dark plaits fell from shapely heads, and scores of drab shawls covered as many shoulders, and the short working dresses revealed rough boots or uncovered feet and ankles. What strange, unkempt beings with graceful forms and melancholy faces! How they nudged, and shoved, and whispered to one another, gazing at us fixedly, yet for the most part curiously silent! Gradually we rose to a level with the watching crowd, and as we drove our paddles into the water their quiet, solemn reticence seemed to fall from them, and some of them began to laugh pleasantly, and some of them made a mocking sound of kissing with their lips.

Among a little crowd of barges moored by a wharf we escaped from the curious eyes. My companion preferred as usual to stay with the canoe, whilst my choice led me to explore the town. I made my way to the road which crosses the canal, and following it between little grey and white houses, ascended the hill on which Lisburn is built. In leaving the canoe I had left that which gave me distinction in the eyes of the inhabitants, and so was at liberty to wander about without being the object of curiosity. I came to the centre of the town where the broad market-place is flanked by busy little shops; at one end stands the market-house with its comfortable clock-tower, and behind it is the cathedral-church, its square tower surmounted by the slender and, as it seemed, infinitely tall spire which, when we were still far off on the canal, had mounted into the uppermost parts of the landscape, showing now on our right hand, now on our left. It was so slender and aerial that it seemed hardly to rest on any base, and it hovered wanly over the town like some disembodied image of its history. It looked as if during the three hundred years of its life it had spurned the inhabitants who had come to live in this grey, clean place—the Welsh and the English who had been settled in Charles I.'s reign, the Huguenots who had fled from persecution in France and brought hither their fine linen and their patents, and the Irish who had fought against Phelim O'Neill, their countryman. Within there is a monument to Jeremy Taylor, to whose learning and loyalism

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Lisburn Church owes the fact that it is the cathedral of the diocese.

In Lisburn I had no adventures worth recording. My shopping was a brief affair, and the lateness of the hour curtailed my visit. We had set ourselves to reach the "Union Lock," where, in the process of climbing a steep hill, the canal passes through an ascending series of gates. The sun was already casting horizontal rays over the country when we laboriously lugged our vessel up the hill. A few men and women who lived in the cottages by the lock lazily watched our labours, but offered no assistance. When again we were afloat the sun had already disappeared and left only a red blaze shot with grey in the western sky. There was a moist, dewy feeling in the air. Insects whizzed and hopped about on the motionless surface of the water. On both sides the land rose in a long, even bank which hid the surrounding country. We looked anxiously for a suitable place to camp, but the monotony of this sombre, artificial bank made one place no more likely than another. Then we became aware of the sweet scent of many flowers, and we passed a garden enclosing a whitewashed, thatched cottage around which fruit-trees and hedges clustered. An old man replied to our greeting. We asked him if there was any reason why we should not camp on the opposite side of the canal. There was no reason. Sure what harm could we do? He filled our water-bottles for us with fresh well-water; and paddling on forty yards we put in to the opposite shore. The canoe grounded on mud and among weeds; we lifted the luggage on to the grassy towing-path. Beyond the path was a steep bank six or seven feet high covered with gorse and thistles. We scrambled up it, and found a broad, disused waggon-track, where the grass grew short and thick, and on the farther side of our ridge another abrupt dip, and fields gently sloping down as far as the eye could see in the diminishing light. Already the mist was beginning to rise from the water, but we were above it; and we found a flat, grassy space large enough for our tent, with nothing worse than a shallow wheel-line which served to divide the tent into two fairly proportioned parts. For lack of fuel we made shift with our spirit-lamp, and whilst

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I was disposing ground-sheets, blankets, and pillows in the tent, my companion cooked beef and prepared the evening meal. The grass was soaked with dew, but our ground-sheets were proof against the damp; and as the darkness settled down we sat dry at the entrance of the tent and consumed our beef and beer by the light of a candle and the moon.

The clouds had vanished, and the Milky Way spread its arch over the sky. Nestling among the trees and bushes behind us, on the farther side of the canal, was a single light from our friendly cottage; and beneath us, towards the north, another light shone from a farmhouse. The land sloped away from us dimly, and was wrapped in a silence that was the more mysterious in that we knew nothing of the country in front of us, to the right of us, or to the left of us. My friend had already disposed himself for sleep, and I too, leaving the front of the tent partly open, got into my sleeping-clothes, wrapped myself in my blankets, and, with the candle casting its flickering gleam on the roof of the tent, began to write up what my companion called my "log." As I lay, writing and idling by turns, the silence was suddenly broken by a noise as of distant shouting. We both sat up and listened, and as we listened, again we heard the faint murmur as if a hundred voices far distant were raised in uproar. "It sounds like coyotes," said the other, whose memories were all memories of the prairie or the mountain. I continued my desultory writing, hearing now and again the barking of farm-dogs. Once I heard the sound of a train which must have come from Lisburn, and again I heard the cry of mingled voices sounding grimly in the distance. One wondered what men they were who thus shouted, and what excitement possessed them. And as I recalled the desolate places that had been passed, the untenanted homes, and the empty cultivated fields, it dawned upon me with almost uncanny suggestion that this apparently empty country was really *alive*, alive with people for whom existence meant something which was mysterious to us but of realised value to them. And as I listened my companion turned round and lifted himself up for a moment: "This knocks out all romance," he muttered, half awake, half asleep.

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II. WATER

Now and again I find in my memory the impression of a solitary universe of water—water that mounts up before and behind and around—water that ripples and curls, iron-grey and silver in hue—or water smooth-flowing, deep, preoccupied, relentless. I see it as a thing wind-swept, sudden and inevitable, sweeping round a spit of land where forests of rushes, shelterless, divide it from the unapproachable shore. I fancy it as an element extending not only infinitely through space but also through infinite time, changing from the smooth, indifferent oasis where one rests on it, to the hostile, implacable tempest against which arms, legs, ears, eyes, thoughts combine in ceaseless ferocity of battle while every sense seems merged in a single, half-blind sensation of warfare against an irreconcilable element.

Philosophers tell us that if the universe consisted of a single sensation we should not be able to perceive it; that there would be nothing with which to contrast it, nothing to which to relate it. In spite of the singleness of the water sensation, I think of its infinite flood as an infinity hostile to me; I think of the humanity which it lacks; of the invisible men and women whose voices are wafted over unbridgable gulfs of waving rushes; of a canoe so tiny as to be negligible in its waste; of a dim past and future when water was not and will not be the omnipotent fact.

This picture of water which surges up in the memory is not concerned with the prettily placid ooze of the canal, nor even the vast expanse of Lough Neagh, but with the Shannon on whose inhospitable bosom I was to entrust myself alone in less tranquil days: the unknown Shannon which throughout the earlier journeys beckoned us on as the Ultima Thule of our ambition, the Shannon of the bogland and the ancient shrines and the castles.

But in recalling my later experience I wonder at our ignorant audacity in tempting the unknown might of Lough Neagh, a lake nearly twenty miles in length and ten to fourteen miles in breadth: an expanse over which at times waves eight feet high crowd close upon one another as they never crowd in the real

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sea, so that even the Lurgan steamer does not venture to face it. From what I have seen in other Irish loughs I can picture it as an interminable wilderness of violence hissing and spurting with a feminine shrillness unknown to the salt ocean.

But I at least have no right to revile its temper. To us it showed its sweetest mood. Though we essayed its stormiest quarter it dealt us no hard buffets, but revealed its huge, soft, reflecting surface, its distant encircling mountains, and its lovely harmonies of sunset colour. To me Lough Neagh is a mirror of warm sunshine and alluring coasts and sweet air that seemed to smell of mountains and water and white clouds. I see its blue face and its blue-white sky, and the dark, distant rim of the uprising coast.

Forests and ancient cities lie buried beneath Lough Neagh. Remnants of an early civilisation are sometimes dragged from its bottom. Ruined castles which the eye can detect from afar testify to the fierce tribal warfare and the days when the real and the fabulous O'Neills dominated its coasts. But to-day the wild-fowl are in possession, and only from a few villages do the fishermen emerge to wage war with line and net.

We came upon it all at once. A low neck of land had hidden the wide landscape from us. The canal had descended into an arm of the lake, and as we reached its shoulder the broad prospect stretched out before us to the west and to the north. One after another the mountains revealed themselves against the sky-line, and we felt ourselves swaying on the gently rocking bosom of the freshwater sea. The land behind us slipped away. To the south it receded in a spacious bay. We pulled towards a projecting spit of rocky shore, and, rounding it, shot out upon a broad, open sheet of water. Three miles off we could see Ardmore Point, and beyond that nothing but the lough. The warm sun seemed to bathe in delicately dancing water, and it was pleasant to dip one's drinking-bottle in this vast spring and take deep draughts of it.

When we were about a mile from the shore there appeared a patch of greyness moving towards us across the lake. It came nearer and nearer, and just before it touched us there was an eddying movement in the water, and in another moment

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we were struck by a north-westerly breeze and found ourselves rolling in the troughs of boisterous wavelets. We pressed on, but the shelter of Ardmore Point was far away and the wind against us, and we found we had been drifting to the south. Here a long narrow promontory juts out into the bay, and as we were drifting near it I felt my paddle strike against a hard object. We were in a shallow, rock-strewn place in which it behoved us to move cautiously. As we felt our way the canoe grated threateningly against a lump of stone. We backed and advanced, and again backed and advanced, till, feeling our way towards the narrow spit of land, we were able to jump into the water, unlade the canoe, and carry it over the spiky rocks which formed the beach.

Here on a low-lying, desert peninsula, among pebbles and short stumpy grass, with the water all round and almost on a level with our feet, we lit our fire and cooked our lunch. For a little while we lay on our backs beneath the shelter of the canoe, observing the movements of a boat far off sailing under a great spread of canvas, watching the curlew which flew up from the rushes, and listening to the mournful human cry of gulls which circled above the water. To the north-east the ridges of the Antrim hills sloped steeply towards the lake, and in the north-west Slieve Gallion presented its imposing summit. I know not what recollection of ancient experience came upon me here. It identified itself with the memory of a tropical day among the Balkans, on the great mountain-clad lake of Ochrida, when all through the afternoon we had reclined on the platform of the primitive *tchun* which three oarsmen in the prow and one in the stern, the sweat pouring from their backs, propelled with tireless energy as they shouted to one another in the Bulgarian tongue; and one of them, an Albanian, suddenly leaped up with a shout of triumph and plunged headlong in the water, whence he rose with a grin and clambered again into his seat in the high prow; and as the sun began to set behind the black mountains of Albania, the breeze came down and touched the warm motionless water, rocking it and pitching us for a few moments hither and thither, and withdrawing as suddenly; and over the renewed silence of the darkening lake there stole

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the deep sound of a bell, the welcoming signal of the monastery of Sveti Naoum.

But that is another tale, a memory of the ever-disordered yet ever-reposeful land of Turkey. This lough indeed, beautiful as it lies under the sun and bright clouds, cannot quite vie with the inimitable blue of Ochrida; its mountains do not frown with that inaccessible ferocity of the Balkans. But there is that in all of us which makes us wish to repeat experience; to recover that speck of colour, that suggestion of light, that *ensemble* of feeling which, because it was memorable, was necessarily unique. Perhaps if I saw Lough Neagh again I might think: This does not quite compare with Lough Neagh as I saw it on that first Saturday in August. Nor could it compare. For it was individual then, and now, on this second time, it behoves us to find the new phase of its individuality, the fresh store of experience that it may hold for us; so that we may go on, and not live sluggishly upon our capital.

Yet I must confess that it was not only Lough Neagh which made me think of my journey in the Near East. Again and again as I passed through the towns and villages of Ireland I was reminded of the scenes, the customs, the manners, and the barbaric geographical hinterland of Turkey-in-Europe.

But for a fact here was I on the territory of the United Kingdom—the United Kingdom, mark you—stretched on the carcass of the earth, surveying an unfamiliar expanse of now placid water and beaming sky. Unfamiliar, I said—yet not quite unfamiliar; for since the beginning of time these things have been, and one is fain to believe that from the beginning of time one has known them. One recognises them. They are not hostile like strangers. They afford a welcome. In the soul there is something which is harmonious with them, respondent, satisfied, so that mundane ties and problems resume their philosophic proportion in the cosmic scheme, and the mind is active and at peace.

Such is the yielding, responsive nature of water that it actually takes hold of the body and penetrates its corners as one bathes in it. I undress and dip myself in the warm lake; and whilst the water clings round the body the clean air clings

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round the head and receives the bather emerging, the unperceived, ever-present, refreshing air, the air so often neglected, forgotten, befouled, the boon of air, which is always sweetest when it embraces the water, or when it rises in freedom around the hill-tops.

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Our little promontory sank behind us as we stole forth on the now tranquil bosom of the lake. We crossed the broad bay and passed far out into the water in doubling the projecting rocks of Ardmore Point. As we skirted the bending shore, we came to shallows based by sandy furrows, and to the south we saw clustering houses and fishing-boats, and inhabitants occupying themselves we knew not how upon the shore. Still we passed on, leaving more houses and boats behind us, till we had passed another little rocky point, and found ourselves near a green, pleasant land full of promise for the camper. As we drew near to it the now rocky bottom endangered our craft, and we were casting about in our minds how best to circumnavigate the shallows when a shrill voice hailed us, and an old tattered man ran into the water and seized us and dragged us towards the shore.

III. LAKE-DWELLERS

His face was seamed and ruddy with old age and recklessness. The whiskers stuck out in patches about his half-shaved face. His hair grew plentifully in wild, unkempt curls. His coat was out at elbows, and his breeches were conspicuous by the holes in the knees, in the seat, and at various jagged points where the flesh revealed itself. He stood straight up like a "gentleman," but with an incapacity for keeping still which in another person would have denoted drunkenness or St. Vitus's dance—though he was afflicted by neither of these ailments. His eyes were genial and merry, but they seemed to flicker when you looked at them.

He burst into a torrent of words. "Sure you'll be drowned in your little canoe if the wind springs up, and what would you be going to do if I had not come and pulled you up out of the

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water? Ah there, not at all, my trousers are not wet in the least!—sure my missis will wring them out and dry them before a bit of turf. Before ever that happens they will have dried themselves against my legs, and I none the worse. Now where will you be going to put this boat and all the traps? Camping! Why, bless my soul, I'll take you to a place where you'll rest soft and dry as if you were on a feather bed. You'll be soaked with moisture if you stay down here among the long rushes. God in mercy, come along with me, and I'll show you a place."

He led the way with a fine air of proprietorship, lordly in his rags. We stumbled after him over a flat wilderness of grass and spear-rushes and furze which bordered the lough, and came to a place where the ground rose and the grass was smooth and dry, and a long hedge and a row of great trees afforded a leafy background. We surveyed the scene with satisfaction—it was an ideal camping-ground. Our friend disclaimed any personal credit for these advantages, modestly assuring us that they were due to nature alone. We hauled our luggage over the dank shore and up to the dry, sheltered place which had been found for us; and as we adjusted the canvas to the poles and made the guy-ropes firm and taut, our wise Nestor looked on and plied us with shrewd advice, counselling us how best we might avoid this danger and that with which no thinkable mischance could have threatened us. It was a greater satisfaction to him than to us when the tent was fairly pitched, and he was able to poke in his nose and survey the interior with the air of a connoisseur examining a picture. Sure we should be very snug, and just as comfortable as if we were in a house. Indeed there wasn't much room, but six feet of earth were supposed to be enough for most men, though we didn't look as if we should need it yet—the Lord forfend! He wouldn't mind sleeping there himself, not at all. All we needed was a bit of turf for a fire, and perhaps some bread, or some butter, or some eggs, which it would be a pleasure to send round from his wee house. Ah sure, he would bring them round at once. It was no trouble at all. Well, if the gentleman would come with him, it was only a step or two; it was nothing.

So we went together, he and I, along the grassy path which

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ran by the side of the hedge and parallel to the shore. We came to a long, white, thatched building, divided into two cottages, the homes of two numerous families. Their members were strangers to me then, but now I think I know them all—their names, their faces, perhaps even their complicated relationship. Catholics at one end of the building, Protestants at the other, they fraternised under the ordinary obligations of neighbourship, and hid their secret and separating ideals beneath a common materialism. The distinction between the two households was not so rigidly observed by their human inmates as by the cocks and hens, who were bigoted Protestants on the left and bigoted Catholics on the right—so far as I could observe they never mistook their proper roosting-place. Through the midst of them I made my way into the bosom of the Catholic fortress. A chair was brought for me, and set in the middle of the room facing the great hearth; and four generations of folk were brought before me, and the process of hand-shaking began and continued. It seemed that I was to them a phenomenon not less astonishing than a comet might have been. I shook hands with a very old and mellowed woman, with a middle-aged woman, and with a young woman, and I proceeded to admire the shapeless babe which was torn from its cradle and its sleep to pay its respects to the visitor. It did not cry, as most babies do under these conditions, but blinked and wheezed a little; it was fondled warmly by a young woman who claimed the rights of an aunt, and when it ceased to be the focus of attention it relapsed opportunely into slumber. A few formal and courteous remarks were bandied to and fro, so that I felt as if I were in a drawing-room. "Yes, two lumps, if you please," I was on the verge of saying, when asked how many eggs I would take.

Lizzie was to go and fetch me some bread. Lizzie belonged to cottage number two, but the old man asserted patriarchal authority over every one who ventured within sound of his voice. His commands were never questioned, but I am not sure that they were always obeyed. But Lizzie ran off at his behest. She was a child of twelve, a pretty, sprite-like creature whose slender bare legs carried her to and fro as if she were a

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butterfly. She came flying after us to the camp with eggs and loaves and butter, and stood shyly hovering round when her errand was done, looking with curious amusement at the tent, and smiling timidly if she caught any one glancing in her direction. We asked her what she thought of our house. She was tongue-tied, but with bent head gazed long and wistfully into the arcana of the tent. "Drat the girl," said the old man, "get home to your mother," and before any other word could be spoken she had melted away among the furze-bushes.

Our fire of mingled peat and wood crackled merrily, and the billie which contained our supper began to simmer gratefully. When the preparations for food were within sight of completion, Nestor left us to our own devices. The sun still showed above the distant hills, making a glory among the clouds and brilliant colours on the smooth surface of the lough. The flat green shore seemed to open itself in speechless abandonment to the touch of communing water and sky and ethereal air. There was no flaw in the continuity of land and lake and the clear-cut edges of mountains which seemed suspended in the horizon amid the harmonious marvel of the clouds and the water. Human beings there were none, but humanity seemed to have been absorbed, refined and silenced before the searching personality of nature. Small things and large lose their disproportion under this tranquillising influence. The steam from a kettle mingles rightly with the purple smoke of the sun, and the curlew and the snipe are not too small to send echoes sounding through an otherwise silent, but tenanted, universe. It is as if one's soul bathed in ether and thrilled to each gentle wave that swept through it from end to end, and were washed clean of prickly ideas.

For a hundred years the sophisticated world has so belauded and besmeared the charms of nature that to many people it has come to be rather an artistic decoration than a penetrating fact. Men go forth now to seek nature and do not wait till it comes. For all of us who have been brought up upon literature and conscious ideas there must be something lost to counterbalance what is gained. We are vain enough to suppose that before Blake and Wordsworth and Coleridge wrote, the English

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world did not perceive the beneficent grandeurs of wild scenery. In reality, I suppose, the Romantics have only taught men to put themselves in an attitude of detachment from nature; to recognise explicitly what before they implicitly felt. They have become spectators of what we call Nature, and to that extent have ceased to be a part of it.

Surely there can be no real sanity for those who cut themselves off continually from the concrete things of life or the healing touch of the unspoilt air. Perpetual contact with earth, with roughly contrived chattels, with growing things, gives even the dull English labourer a certain fixed standard of measurement which tends to balance his poor, starved mind. Sophisticated people trained in ideas can no more afford to be without such concrete standards than those whose minds are wrapped up in the particular; rather, they need them more, for in their excursions through the intellectual realm of symbols, in the constant use of things manufactured they know not how or where, the mind is less often brought down to the bed-rock of natural fact, unhewn, unpolished, undisguised by custom or contrivance. Consider how even the food which we eat is made to be as unlike as possible to that from which it is derived —growing corn, shambling oxen, birds, fish, roots or nuts. Our wooden furniture scarcely resembles wood; the bricks or stone of which our houses are built are concealed by the patterns of our wall-paper; and even our acquaintances are reduced as much as possible to a monotonous uniformity induced by social custom and etiquette. If we cannot ourselves be in direct touch with the hardness and liveness of rudimentary things, it at least remains to us to seek intercourse with those to whom such actual contact is the touchstone of reality.

The rustic is of all modern men the nearest to this kernel of fact, if it is his rare fortune to live far from a great industrial town, to be undominated by a decadent feudalism, and to belong to a stock not exhausted by the removal of its noblest sons. Such a rustic may be found in Cornwall and Devon, perhaps in some parts of the north of England, and certainly in Ireland. For him the sweet smell of the earth may be dulled from habitude, and the colours of the sunset sky may come and

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go unadmired. But it would be a bold person who should say that these things are nothing to him. They are in his bones, though he may never be at the pains to dissect his anatomy. At least he learns to watch the sky to see if it is propitious for good weather ; he knows the names of the birds and the plants ; he is dexterous with his hands. Be sure he has a wisdom and a lore of his own which it is not for us to fathom.

The report of a gun sounding sharply across the water cut short my reflections. "Shooting snipe!" The eager voice was that of our elderly acquaintance, who had come up unperceived, and was pointing towards a rocky, weedy islet where the sportsman lay concealed. "It's getting too dark," he said, "he won't hit anything to-night," but as he spoke an upflying bird was arrested in its flight and fell in swift descent. Two younger men had joined our company, one with long curly black hair which spread in disorder over brow and ears, the other with a bandage over the left eye which gave him a curious side-long expression. All stood with their hands up to their eyes to get a better view of the sport, and between the reports of the gun which never failed to raise a sharp cry of expectancy and criticism from one and all, Nestor poured forth speech, brandishing his long arms, raising and dropping his shrill voice which sped like a gust of wind. He was telling us of the man who used to creep out at dusk to that island and distil the "poikin" which he made for three years without being discovered. "Ach, yes, they found him out in the end, and he got six months' imprisonment—and now he's gone somewhere else—to another county, maybe." He winked knowingly and pirouetted on his toes ; and out went his arm again like a signal pointing to a spot far off on the east of the lough where the last light of the sun had been caught and reflected by grey masonry.

"Look, look, look," he shouted, "there you see it!" He caught me by the arm. "Can you catch the glint of it? The castle of Shane O'Neill!" Straightway in his confused, torrential manner he rushed off into the anecdote of the first O'Neill, who owned all the country hereabouts because his hand was the first to touch the shore.

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"Have you heard tell how the boats all pushed and crowded towards the shore, and men jumped into the water and waded and swam and cursed? That O'Neill plucked his great sword from his side and cut through the flesh and bone of his wrist, and threw his hand bleeding to the shore in front of all the others while they muddled and splashed in the water. That was how he became chieftain in all these parts."

The old man's face shone with excitement. In the half light, prancing to and fro with his waving arms and his flashing eyes, respectfully observed by the two men his companions, he seemed like some reincarnation of the wild men who rejoiced in the might of Cuchulin; could not he too, like the story-tellers of old, people the place with an attendant train of "the Bocánachs, and the Banánachs, and the wild people of the glens, and the demons of the air"?

But in a moment he was off again in some fearsome narrative or some jesting obscenity, and when his tongue ceased for a moment from its coarse merriment, he walked about examining our fire, our luggage, our tent.

"Not much room in your little house," he said, prying round. And he whispered audibly to the one-eyed man, "How do they get on without any women to look after them?"

"That's the worst of men," he continued in a louder tone. "If you touch a man when you're sleeping near him, he'll kick you; but if you touch a woman—Lord, she won't say a word!"

He laughed uproariously.

And so he talked till the daylight faded into dusk and the dusk was becoming night. But before the darkness had settled down we became aware of other, softer voices and the tread of timid feet, and looking up I saw a little group—slim Lizzie with her sweet, wistful face, and a somewhat older girl, her sister, and a dark, broad-browed woman holding by the hand a small bare-legged urchin. Another child lagged in the rear. The flickering fire lighted up their faces as they stood beside a gorse-bush waiting patiently till some one would notice them. So still and silent were they, like statues, so melancholy and resigned was the face of the woman, that it might have been ill-fated Niobe with her children who stood there fixed in marble.

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What a pretty tent it was, said the woman, and how clear the sky had been! She paused and sighed, "Ah, well!" Each remark ended with that deep sigh and that melancholy ejaculation. She commented on the promise of fine weather and the stillness of the lough, as if in apology for her sadness. It was beautiful here in the summer, but in the winter—"ah, well!" She pictured the gloom of the scene, and the rain, and the rising flood—"ah, well!" it was no good to complain. There were her children (Lizzie and Mary looked up smiling, and dropped their eyes again); she had had eight children, and six of them were living—"ah, well." She was a farmer's daughter, and was married to a labourer. Ah, well, he was a good man. She was a Protestant, and the old man, her neighbour, was a Catholic. But, ah, well, they were all very friendly together.

She smiled ever so faintly, and the resigned expression settled down on her delicate, once-handsome features. She pulled Mary by the sleeve, and pointed to the cooking-utensils, and Mary's great dark eyes gazed in wonderment. She scarcely spoke, but if her glance met ours she smiled, gazed archly a moment, and looked down.

The next morning, Sunday, Lizzie and Mary and the little boy were like will-o'-the-wisps flitting round the camp, darting in and out among the gorse and the rushes, their white legs twinkling in the sun. Oftenest it was Lizzie who came near and made some shy remark, after which she would dance off again, her old print dress waving round her knees with fantastic grace, while my friend and I in amazement would watch the easy, fairy-like step of these labourer's daughters, so different from the awkward lurch of our village children.

But it was an unlucky moment when I got out my camera and sought to take a picture of this elf-like creature. As if by magic the three of them disappeared, and when later they visited the scene shoes and stockings had been donned, and dull, immaculate, Sunday-best dresses. Meantime other visitors had arrived, the old man and the old woman, their daughters and grand-daughters and the baby; and from other cottages on the west came buxom, cheerful dames, two pleasant young men,

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and some boys who challenged us to single combat. Over them all, with patriarchal authority, reigned the wise-counselling Nestor, and as all seated themselves on the ground it was he who led the conversation, and directed it along devious courses of domestic and public politics.

Through all that long warm morning, and till two hours after noon, we talked and idled and gazed at boats which passed far out on the lough ; and all in turn looked through binoculars, and made absurd jokes, and talked about families, about chickens and goats, about the peat bog, poteen whisky, snipe, magistrates, and the draining of the River Bann. Finally, beneath the blazing sun we rolled up the tent and shouldered our baggage and waded into the shallow, stony water, carrying the canoe with us. All the hamlet clustered at the brink as we took the paddles and waved adieu ; all of them, old and young, the men and the women, the boys and the fairy damsels, cried us God-speed and waved their arms. And when, far off in the water, I turned and looked back, I saw them still clustered at the edge waving and gazing after the strangers.

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Monsieur Félicité

By Hugh Walpole

Of all French towns Villeton is least touched by modern influences; it lies (like a pearl-grey shell) between the arms of a brown round-backed hill—over it the sky is, during most of the year, a burning blue, and out of it rise, like hands stretched out to bless, the two white towers of the cathedral.

It had remained altogether mediæval in spite of its railway, for its tower and its cathedral have kept it so; the tower is the "Tour du Prince Noir," but nobody knows why it is called that—it is grey and tumbling and stands on a little green hill where daffodils and snowdrops blow white and yellow in the spring.

A steep hill and every little crooked street in the town leads up to the old church. It fills one side of the market-place and from its great carved door and its myriad-coloured windows looks down on all the busy chattering life of the place.

Monsieur Félicité lived on the other side of the square opposite the cathedral.

If you were to go and stay at Villeton nowadays—in the summer it is very hot, but in the spring there is no place pleasanter—you will hear them refer to him continually. He ruled like a little king there in his day, and yet he was one of the gentlest and mildest of men, and never quarrelled with anybody except on the one great occasion about which I am going to tell you.

There are pictures of him scattered about, and one rather fine painting in the big *salle* of the "Soleil Rouge"—much the best inn in the place. The work is amateurishly done, but something of the vitality and humour of the man is caught by it. He is wearing the faded brown tail-coat that he always had, light at the waist, with round shiny buttons at the back;

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brown velveteen trousers, very wide and baggy; and a great brown bow of a tie falling over his white frilled shirt. But the face is irresistible. I never knew him personally, but I have sat gazing at that picture for I'm ashamed to say how long, loving those brown eyes twinkling with good humour and that fine strong mouth just turning up at the corners into a little ghost of a smile. His hair was white when the picture was painted—curly and cropped close to his head.

He was short and a little stout and he always carried a black silver-topped stick with which he tapped, like a cheerful robin, about the streets. Give him a soft hat, large and shady but of no particular shape, and you have him complete—Monsieur Bonaparte Félicité!

I know nothing about his earlier history—it is better to leave that alone; to think of him as young and stern and perhaps impetuous and callous is to think of some one else altogether. For the town he is always that little round merry figure with his white hair and brown tie—they refuse to believe that he was ever anything else. His rooms are still very much as he left them—dark and low-roofed with a wide, open fireplace with little brown tiles and a faded green carpet sprinkled with red roses. There used to be an ancient brown cabinet in the corner, and the old piano was against the wall by the door—those things have gone.

He was always to be seen drinking his tea in the window as the evening began to enfold the little town and the shadows crept like ghosts across the market-place. His lamp would burn like a beacon there as he watched the stars come out one by one over the towers of the cathedral. People would wish him a cheerful "*Bonsoir, monsieu'*," as they passed, but he had no relations of his own; there was only Madame Bette, who looked after him, and, of course, his great friend André.

It is about Monsieur André and the quarrel that he had with Monsieur Félicité that I am going to tell you, for it is always the story that they will tell you first about him. Monsieur André was an enormous giant of a man. There is still a rough little sketch of him at the house of Monsieur Raguilleau, the notary, and it is, they say, a good likeness. He was as broad as he was tall, and

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extraordinary stories were told of his strength, but his eyes wer kind and his mouth smiled. He served in '70 against the Prussians, and to the intimate circle at the "Soleil Rouge" in the evening he would tell the most wonderful stories about those days and the things that he had seen and done.

He was very proud and curiously shy unless you knew him well, and he was a very difficult man to know. He was hopelessly unpractical and had no common sense at all, and his rooms were always dreadfully untidy and his clothes uncared for until he became intimate with Monsieur Félicité. He used to forget his meals and go wandering out into the fields and woods, cutting off the heads of the poppies as though they had been so many Prussians and muttering to himself all the time.

He was a very affectionate man, but before he met Monsieur Félicité he had no one to whom to give it all save a kind of mongrel dog called "Boule de Suif" because of its round "podgy" shape, like the poor lady in Maupassant's story. The dog was always with him, and an unpleasant kind of dog it was to every one except its master. Then he met Monsieur Félicité and the dog had to take second place.

Their meeting was under the wide arch of Madame Permon's door in the Rue des Ecoliers in a shower of rain, and afterwards they shared an umbrella. Monsieur Félicité was always charming to every one, but, on this occasion, he had to do most of the talking, and Monsieur André came in, every now and again, with a "*Ha!*" or a "*Mais, oui!*" and at times a surly "*Mais, non!*" from the back of his throat. It must have been amusing to watch them because Monsieur André refused to hold the umbrella and Monsieur Félicité had to stand on the edge of his toes to keep it high enough. Outside Monsieur Félicité's door they stopped, and for a moment nothing was said; then suddenly Monsieur André shot out his hand and gripped the handle of the umbrella and Monsieur Félicité's fingers so fiercely that the little man winced.

Then the giant turned hurriedly away and, with "Boule de Suif" at his heels, sped round the corner.

After that, Monsieur André was often to be seen in the square; sometimes he would walk round and round, his head

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down, his arms folded behind his back, his dog at his heels, and not a word would he say to any one. His visit had, apparently, no relation at all to Monsieur Félicité, for he never went near his door nor did he glance up at his window. Once the little man watched him, and at last came out of his house, intending to speak to him, but Monsieur André was round the corner in a moment.

At last he was caught leaning against the wall looking vacantly into space, and, shamefaced and reluctant, he was made to climb the stairs to the room with the green carpet and the brown cabinet. He stared in amazement at the neatness of it and sat down suddenly, without a word—like the Queen of Sheba, "there was no more spirit in him." Monsieur Félicité made tea and talked all the time in the charming, graceful way that he had. He was so humble and tender-hearted a little man that he flung a beautiful light over everything. "Boule de Suif" loved him at once—as indeed did all children and animals —and soon Monsieur André, being nothing more than a child himself, followed his dog's example.

Then Monsieur André began to talk, and soon his stories were pouring out in a great, tempestuous stream. I don't think that Monsieur Félicité believed it all, even from the first, and, after a time, he misdoubted it altogether, but he would sit in the corner by the fire, smiling, his little hands folded, and every now and again a "*Mais, oui!*" or "*Certainement!*" or "*Mon Dieu!*" shot out like little bullets. I think he took the stories as part of his friend and never minded their impossibility. Sometimes Monsieur André himself wondered whether some especially daring statement could really be true, and he would pause for a moment and look sharply at his friend—but, after an instant's hesitation, conviction would be back again and with a satisfied "*Moi, j'étais là!*" he would go on again.

Soon they were inseparable, and all the town knew that it was so. There must have been some jealousy about it, for Monsieur Félicité was the idol of the town and the others did not see why Monsieur André should appropriate him so entirely. They liked the man well enough, and they treated his stories respectfully although they laughed behind his back. He certainly had

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the grand manner, and he piled Pelion on Ossa with a gesture and a gusto that covered a multitude of untruths. Besides, after all, the people of Villeton were not so very truthful themselves, and a story was always to be saved by its interest rather than its accuracy.

Once a week, on Friday evenings, they went down to the Rue Soleil and smoked with their friends. Monsieur Félicité had never joined these assemblies before; he had gone out very little in the evening, but now Monsieur André brought him with him and of course he was given the warmest of welcomes. Those Friday gatherings still go on and you can see the very corner in which Monsieur Félicité used to sit—at the back, to the right, under the painting of Monsieur Soul, fat and red-faced, onetime Mayor of Villeton. The room is charming with its low smoke-stained roof, its oak panelling and red-brick floor. An old oak partition rising half-way to the ceiling cuts the room into two, and it was behind this, in the most delicious and intimate privacy, round a large and shining table, that they sat.

There were ten of them at that time—the most celebrated being young Jacques Paturôt, poet and pastry-cook; Monsieur Marteau, the bookseller; and Monsieur Raguilleau, the notary, who was responsible for most of the quarrelling.

Monsieur André sat on his friend's right with "Boule de Suif" at his feet and an enormous pipe in his mouth. He was generally silent until he considered that the crucial moment had come, then he would cough, lean forward over the table and begin. The rest of the company listened somewhat phlegmatically, but they never interrupted, and murmured at times to show that they were attending. Then, his story over, Monsieur André would sink back into his seat again and listen to other people.

After a while Monsieur Félicité began to be worried. He had, by this time, a great affection for his friend and he was very jealous of everything that concerned his reputation. Once he had overheard Monsieur Permon and Monsieur Raguilleau laughing at the stories; they had mocked at Monsieur André in a way that hurt the little man dreadfully. He went back to his room and pondered over the matter.

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He knew that, in the future, every story that his friend told would torture him; those nights at the club, hitherto so gay and delightful, would now be impossible. He could not sit there and listen to his friend and know that those others were laughing to themselves. He had not minded the stories when they were told in his room with no other person there—then it was for himself alone to judge, and he had loved the great rambling boaster far too dearly to judge him severely. It had, indeed, puzzled him a little. Monsieur André, on all other occasions, was modest and retiring, and indeed agreed with his friend in any proposal that was made, but, so soon as '70 was mentioned, the head was raised, the chest swelled, and "*Moi, j'étais là!*" came bursting forth—for a moment cannons roared, corpses lay strewn about the dark little streets of Villeton, and Monsieur André was a hero indeed—even "Boule de Suif" took on a new and splendid grandeur. It was all rather ridiculous perhaps, but so long as there was no audience it mattered nothing at all—the maddening thought was that the whole town should laugh and jeer. Monsieur Félicité was furious at the thought. He thought and thought about it, but could come to no definite conclusion. He realised that his friend was a very sensitive person and that the whole matter was one of extreme delicacy. To tell him publicly would be impossible from every point of view—he could see the startled looks of his friends and he could hear the chatter pass round the room. No, whatever happened, it must be quietly done. At the next meeting in the Rue Soleil it chanced that Monsieur André was more talkative than ever. The stories burst from him as lava from a volcano. It was in Paris and he had rescued a girl, a beautiful girl; he had had to climb with her on to roofs and then there had been only a telegraph-wire between them and death. He wiped his brow with an enormous red handkerchief at the recollection.

Monsieur Félicité's cheeks burned as he listened. This was the kind of thing at which they all laughed. He watched his friend—so pleased and proud, his hand in the air, his eyes twinkling, and at last that triumphant "*Eh! Moi, j'étais là!*"—then his eyes turned slowly to Monsieur Permon, Monsieur Raguilleau, Monsieur Marteau, Jacques Paturôt and the rest;

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they were sitting there quietly, gravely, sucking solemnly at their pipes, nodding approvingly as the climax was reached. He could fancy what they were thinking, what they would say afterwards to their wives, even young Paturôt—"That old André and his stories!"

He went back to his rooms very sad at heart, and as he sat gloomily by his fire he made up his mind to speak to his friend.

On the next evening Monsieur André came in to see Monsieur Félicité. He was happy and pleased—it seemed a good moment in which to say something. Monsieur André talked on—things that he had seen in the town: Madame Permon with her green umbrella and her pug; young Paturôt making verses behind the counter and so mixing the parcels, which only proved that it was better to do one thing at a time; funny and perplexing things that that most intelligent of all dogs, "Boule de Suif," had seen fit to do. He rambled on. Monsieur Félicité sat awkwardly in his chair and said nothing—he was wondering how he ought to begin.

The light from the candles mingled with the firelight on the ceiling in little pools and whirling, twisting shadows—it caught the old twisted chairs, the brown cabinet, and at last danced on Monsieur André's nose.

Monsieur Félicité plunged.

"*Mon ami*——" he said, and paused.

"Yes," said Monsieur André, pulling "Boule de Suif's" ears and looking at the fire.

"There is a thing—that I would like to say." Monsieur Félicité cleared his throat. "I have been wondering a little lately—only a little—about—well, about your stories; the histories, you know, of the war and the things that you have done."

"Yes," said Monsieur André, apparently gratified. "They are good stories."

"Well," said Monsieur Félicité, stammering in his agitation, "they are good stories—splendid stories—I like to listen, above all things. But—there are the others——"

"What others?" said Monsieur André, looking at his friend in a puzzled way.

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"Well, Messieurs Permon, Raguilleau, Marteau . . . and others, our friends . . . they don't believe them, they laugh, they mock—and it hurts me, your friend. They think—that there is too much—that there is exaggeration——"

He paused. Monsieur André said nothing.

Monsieur Félicité went on desperately. "It is not I, you understand, who say that. You are my friend and I hate them to mock. They do it, perhaps, without thought. They do not know. . . ."

There was a long silence. Monsieur André was sitting very stiffly in his chair; the ball in his throat went up and down, and he made little clucking noises like a hen.

"You are my friend," he said at last, slowly, "and you say these things." He spoke in a whisper.

"It is not I," said Monsieur Félicité, "but the others—they say things and laugh. And I love you and I would not have you ridiculous."

At the word "ridiculous" Monsieur André, trembling with anger, rose from his chair; he stood, an enormous figure, in the firelight, one hand trembling in the air, the other hand clenched.

"You say that you are my friend, that you love me," he said, his voice shaking, "and you tell me that my stories are lies, that——"

"No," broke in Monsieur Félicité, "it is not I who say so——"

"But it is you!" cried Monsieur André with furious triumph. "You, my friend. Pah! take that for your friendship!" and he wildly snapped his fingers. "And those others! Did I not go to them long before you? Have they not listened to my histories and am I such a fool, such a cuckoo, such a stuttering simpleton, that I cannot tell whether they believe them? Am I, indeed? No, it is you who cannot believe what I, your friend, say. A pretty friend! A liar, a knave, a teller of tales!" and Monsieur André again snapped his fingers.

"No, please." Monsieur Félicité, his eyes full of tears, rose from his seat and laid his hand on his friend's arm. Monsieur André shook it off and walked towards the door.

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"You have called me a liar! You, my friend!" he shouted. "I have been called a liar and I will never forgive it! Never! Here is an end, for ever, monsieur! Never speak to me again! I know how to value your friendship. You have used language to me that has never been used to an André—it is enough—I shall not forget——"

He flung open the door and stamped furiously into the passage, followed by "Boule de Suif."

Madame Bette heard most of this from the other side of the keyhole, and that is how I know. Any one in Villeton will tell you the same.

Monsieur Félicité sat miserably in front of his fire, hoping that his friend would return. He knew his impetuous temper and that he ever said more than he really meant, and so he listened eagerly as the steps passed beneath his window and voices echoed down the street—but Monsieur André did not come. The coals clicked in little golden caverns, the light died, the grey ashes lay in little heaps where the fire had been, the candles jumped wildly up and down as they sank into their silver holders, little winds rose about the house and whistled at the window, the clock in the market-place struck one, and still Monsieur Félicité sat there. He was gone, his friend, and all that had made those last months so beautiful, so happy, was gone too. Whilst it had lasted he had not realised the security of it, the happiness of knowing that there was some one always there who cared for him. . . . He sat miserably reminiscent. In the morning it was all about the town. Madame Bette had heard it, had seen Monsieur André leave the house. "*Oh! quel mauvais caractère! . . . Mais, oui! il était en colère! . . . C'était effrayant!*" They discussed it at every corner.

On the afternoon of the next day they met, and Madame Permon, who saw them, said that it was pitiful. It was in the Rue des Ecoliers at the narrow corner by the cathedral, so that there was really no room at all and their coats brushed as they passed. Monsieur André was walking, his dog at his heels, with his head high and his moustaches twirled to the utmost twist of ferocity. Monsieur Félicité's head was down, and there were heavy lines under his eyes that showed that he had not slept. He stopped

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and held out his hand. Monsieur André pushed fiercely past him as though he had not been there.

After that there could be no question of compromise. Monsieur Félicité had his pride.

Yes, he had his pride, but he suffered terribly. In the first place he knew that the whole town would talk, was indeed talking with all its might. Groups at corners of the street; Madame Boileau's stall in the market-place, the favourite point of gossip in the town; M. Carité, the tailor, who, with his long nose and great spectacles, was always standing in his door ready for a word with his neighbour—all these people seemed to him bursting with the news. And they did talk of course. It was far too exciting a topic to leave untouched. There was no question of sides; poor Monsieur Félicité had been abominably treated, and that wretched gawk of an André deserved nothing better than a hanging—Monsieur Félicité, who had never quarrelled with any one in the whole of his life, to be pestered by such a creature! They tried to make it up to him, the good women, by little attentions and presents. On the morning after the quarrel the little man found on his table an enormous cucumber, half a ham, a red cotton handkerchief with spots, a pair of carpet slippers, a pair of braces, and a china vase. Madame Bette looked at these things contemptuously and then left the room in a flood of tears, murmuring "*Le pauvre! Le pauvre!*" all the way down to the kitchen. But all this affection could in no way compensate for the loss of his friend. A hundred times a day he felt that he could bear it no longer and started out to make the peace and then, on the way, his pride would return to him, he would flush at the memory of the things that Monsieur André had said, and he would slowly return. He went out very little for fear lest they should meet in the street, and he scarcely dared to sit at his window.

Friday evening was a time of torture, for they both continued to go to the meetings at the "Soleil Rouge," because I think they tried to show to the world that it did not matter, this quarrel.

So there they used to sit, both of them as unhappy as possible.

Monsieur André suffered too, I suppose, and he had the

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execration of the whole town to bear. People would scarcely speak to him, and women would shake their fists at his back and little boys would throw stones at "Boule de Suif." And he loved Monsieur Félicité with an absolutely undying devotion; the longer the quarrel lasted the more he knew that he cared. But his pride was greater than Monsieur Félicité's and he would not give way. Poor Monsieur Félicité grew quite thin and pale; his clothes hung loosely about him, and try as Madame Bette would, she could not keep him neat. He ate very little and slept badly at night. Monsieur André grew so fierce that it was as much as any one's life was worth to speak to him—he was even unkind to "Boule de Suif," and on one terrible occasion he kicked him.

So matters went on for several months, and there seemed to be no hope at all of any reconciliation. Then something happened.

One Friday night at the "Soleil Rouge" Monsieur Raguilleau had news. When Monsieur Raguilleau had news there was no mistaking it; he sat there with his eyes almost closed, his mouth pursed, his nose in the air. One had often to wait a considerable time before the news came—he liked to keep the sensation—but it was generally worth having.

He looked at his absinthe, tilted it for a moment in his glass and then said:

"Marie has returned."

Every one was excited and there were murmurs of "*Mais non!*" and "*Vraiment!*" and "*Mon Dieu!*" passing round the table. Even Monsieur Félicité was moved; his cheeks coloured and he leaned a little forward. Monsieur André sat up straight in his chair and looked at Monsieur Raguilleau. "Marie!" he said with a gasp. Their minds flew back to the time, not so very long ago, when Marie Blanche had lightened the whole town with her smiles—wonderful hair, cheeks like roses, a laugh like a bell, and the temper of an angel! And then a man had come, a fellow from another province, good-looking enough in a black, fierce kind of way, but a scoundrel if ever there was one. She had loved him and gone with him, and her mother had died of grief—and now she had come back alone.

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"She is ill," said Monsieur Raguilleau. "She has a baby. He did not marry her."

He brought his sentence out with a certain sharp satisfaction. He was sorry for the girl of course, but it was something to be able to create a sensation.

"Where is she?" said Monsieur Marteau.

"In a room, 5 Rue Napoléon—the top floor—I have not seen her." This he added in vindication of his own moral conduct. After all he had his character to think about. Marie was no better than she ought to be, and it would not do for respectable citizens . . . Nevertheless he shifted a little, uncomfortably, in his chair.

"Well, well," said Monsieur Permon, also rather uneasy. "Poor thing, poor thing! Still it's her own fault . . . hum . . . ha . . . the brute . . . dear me!" and so left it perfectly clear that he could have nothing to do with the matter. This was the general attitude of the table. We were very respectable in Villeton and it didn't do to be mixed up with that sort of thing.

Monsieur Félicité went back to his rooms and summoned Madame Bette.

"*Voyez*," he said, "I want things—many things."

"Things, monsieur?" she said.

"Yes," he answered impatiently, "for one who is ill—nourishing things—soups and puddings and fruit—and quickly."

Soon, carrying an enormous basket, he passed into the dark street. He took unfrequented paths because he did not wish to be met by any one. They did talk so in Villeton. His thoughts were all with the girl—poor Marie! She had been the delight of the town in those earlier days, and now that scoundrel . . . He clenched his fist and made a little noise in his throat. The Rue Napoléon was very dark, being, indeed, only lighted by one very dismal lamp. No. 5 was a tall and gloomy house with shuttered windows—on the top floor a light was dimly burning.

Monsieur Félicité banged the knocker and the door was opened by an old woman.

"Madame Perite? You have Marie here?"

"Ah! Monsieur!" The old woman burst into tears. "It is pitiful. Until just now no one had come, and it is terrible.

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She has no money . . . and she suffers. *Mon Dieu!* how she suffers! Ah! they are hard, these people."

She held a candle above her head and led the way up the dark stairs. On the top landing she turned and pushed open the door.

"Take the candle, monsieur," she said.

He stepped into the room. It was a large attic—the roof slanted to either side; there was little furniture. A bed against the farther wall, two rickety chairs, a table, and on the chimney-piece a guttering candle.

In the waving light the girl's head lay dark against the white of the pillows; by the bedside a man was kneeling, and at the sound of his voice Monsieur Félicité started, the candle shook in his hand, and he stayed motionless by the door.

"Nay, but Marie, poor little Marie. . . . I will look after the babe. I will see to it that you do not suffer——"

The girl laughed. "Why, Monsieur André—you and the baby!—that would be truly droll. Why, you would not know what to do. But, indeed, monsieur, I am better already now that you have come. There was no one and I was afraid. . . . I knew what they would say——"

She turned her head on the pillow and began to cry softly.

That was too much for Monsieur Félicité. He crossed the room with his basket. He had, for the moment, forgotten Monsieur André.

"Marie . . . little one. It is I, your old friend. Droll Monsieur Félicité with whom you laughed. I had only just heard and I hurried here. And see, here in a basket I have brought things for you and the baby . . . beautiful things."

He went down on his little fat knees by the bed and put his arm round her.

"Ah, monsieur!" she said, and she fainted. At the same moment the baby began to cry.

"*Ah! mon Dieu!* She has fainted! Quick!" he cried to Monsieur André. "Take the baby! I will see to her!"

Monsieur André clumsily picked the baby up and began to hold it upside down. Its cries were redoubled.

"*Mais, non! Pas comme ça!*" Monsieur Félicité took it for a moment and rocked it in his arms. "Like that! Look

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you——" He gave the baby back, and for a moment their hands touched. He bent over the girl. In a little while he had brought her to.

"Oh! It was silly of me. But oh! monsieur, you are so good to me . . . it was too much!"

He knelt by the bed and whispered to her.

Monsieur André stood an enormous shape in the candle-light, rocking the baby.

"Now," Marie said, turning her cheek on the pillows with a smile. "I shall sleep. Ah! messieurs, how good you both are to me."

Soon she slept. There was silence for some time. Then Monsieur Félicité got up from his knees and crossed over to Monsieur André. He put his hand on the other's shoulder; Monsieur André did not look up. His hand passed over his shoulder around his neck; he had to stand on tip-toe.

"*Mon ami*, I am sorry. It is I who have been wrong. I have been lonely—I have been miserable——"

Monsieur André rocked the baby furiously.

"No, but forgive me. I should not have spoken as I did. Carefully, you will wake the baby——"

Monsieur André turned and laid it on the bed.

"No, it is I," he said fiercely, glaring at Monsieur Félicité. "What you have said is true. It is I who have done this. I am a liar, a pig, a scoundrel. . . . It is all true."

"No no," said Monsieur Félicité.

"But it is true. It is not good for you to have such a man for your friend—you who are so good, a hero. But I will try . . . I will tell no more stories. . . . I cannot be without you." He turned and clutched his friend by the coat. "I am very unhappy," he said.

They slowly and solemnly embraced; then, with one last look at the two asleep on the bed, they crept from the room.

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The New Machiavelli

By H. G. Wells

CHAPTER THE SECOND

SEEKING ASSOCIATES

§ 1. I HAVE told of my gradual abandonment of the pretensions and habits of party Liberalism. In a sense I was moving towards aristocracy. Regarding the development of the social and individual mental hinterland as the essential thing in human progress, I passed on very naturally to the practical assumption that we wanted what I may call "hinterlanders." Of course I do not mean by aristocracy the changing unorganised medley of rich people and privileged people who dominate the civilised world to-day, but as opposed to this, a possibility of co-ordinating the will of the finer individuals, by habit and literature, into a broad common aim. We must have an aristocracy—not of privilege, but of understanding and purpose—or mankind will fail. I find this dawning more and more clearly when I look through my various writings of the years between 1903 and 1910. I was already emerging to plain statements in 1908.

I reasoned after this fashion. The line of human improvement and the expansion of human life lies in the direction of education and fine initiatives. If humanity cannot develop an education far beyond anything that is now provided, if it cannot collectively invent devices and solve problems on a much richer, broader scale than it does at the present time, it cannot hope to achieve any very much finer order or any more general happiness than it now enjoys. We must believe, therefore, that it *can* develop such a training and education, or we must abandon secular constructive hope. And here my peculiar difficulty as against crude democracy comes in. If humanity at large is capable of that high education and those creative freedoms our hope demands, much more must its better and more vigorous types be so capable. And if those who have power and leisure now, and freedom to respond to imaginative appeals, cannot be won to the idea of collective self-development, then the whole of humanity cannot be won to that. From that one passes to what has become my general conception in politics, the conception of the constructive imagination working upon the vast complex of powerful people, clever people, enterprising people, influential people, amidst whom power is diffused to-day, to produce that self-conscious, highly selective, open-minded, devoted aristocratic culture, which seems to me to be the necessary next phase in the development of human affairs. I see human progress, not as

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the spontaneous product of crowds of raw minds swayed by elementary needs, but as a natural but elaborate result of intricate human interdependencies, of human energy and curiosity liberated and acting at leisure, of human passions and motives, modified and redirected by literature and art. . . .

But now the reader will understand how it came about that, disappointed by the essential littleness of Liberalism, and disillusioned about the representative quality of the professed Socialists, I turned my mind more and more to a scrutiny of the big people, the wealthy and influential people, against whom Liberalism pits its forces. I was asking myself definitely whether, after all, it was not my particular job to work through them and not against them. Was I not altogether out of my element as an Anti- ? Weren't there big bold qualities about these people that common men lack, and the possibility of far more splendid dreams ? Were they really the obstacles, might they not be rather the vehicles of the possible new braveries of life ?

§ 2. The faults of the Imperialist movement were obvious enough. The conception of the Boer War had been clumsy and puerile, the costly errors of that struggle appalling, and the subsequent campaign of Mr. Chamberlain for Tariff Reform seemed calculated to combine the financial adventurers of the Empire in one vast conspiracy against the consumer. The cant of Imperialism was easy to learn and use ; it was speedily adopted by all sorts of base enterprises and turned to all sorts of base ends. But a big child is permitted big mischief, and my mind was now continually returning to the persuasion that after all in some development of the idea of Imperial patriotism might be found that wide, rough, politically acceptable expression of a constructive dream capable of sustaining a great educational and philosophical movement such as no formula of Liberalism supplied. The fact that it readily took vulgar forms only witnessed to its strong popular appeal. Mixed in with the noisiness and humbug of the movement there appeared a real regard for social efficiency, a real spirit of animation and enterprise. There suddenly appeared in my world—I saw them first, I think, in 1908—a new sort of little boy, a most agreeable development of the slouching, cunning, cigarette-smoking, town-bred youngster, a small boy in a khaki hat, and with bare knees and athletic bearing, earnestly engaged in wholesome and invigorating games up to and occasionally a little beyond his strength—the Boy Scout. I liked the Boy Scout, and I find it difficult to express how much it mattered to me, with my growing bias in favour of deliberate national training, that Liberalism hadn't been able to produce, and had indeed never attempted to produce, anything of this kind.

§ 3. In those days there existed a dining-club called—there was some lost allusion to the exorcism of party feeling in its title—the Pentagram Circle. It included Bailey and Dayton and myself, Sir Herbert Thorns, Lord Charles Kindling, Minns the poet, Gerbault the big railway man, Lord Gane, fresh from the settlement of Framboya, and Rumbold, who later became Home Secretary and left us. We were men of all parties and very various experiences, and our object was to discuss the welfare of the Empire in a disinterested spirit. We dined monthly at the Mermaid in

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Westminster, and for a couple of years we kept up an average attendance of ten out of fourteen. The dinner-time was given up to desultory conversation, and it is odd how warm and good the social atmosphere of that little gathering became as time went on; then over the dessert, so soon as the waiters had swept away the crumbs and ceased to fret us, one of us would open with perhaps fifteen or twenty minutes' exposition of some specially prepared question, and after him we would deliver ourselves in turn, each for three or four minutes. When every one present had spoken once talk became general again, and it was rare we emerged upon Hendon Street before midnight. Sometimes, as my house was conveniently near, a knot of men would come home with me and go on talking and smoking in my dining-room until two or three. We had Fred Neal, that wild Irish journalist, among us towards the end, and his stupendous flow of words materially prolonged our closing discussions and made our continuance impossible.

I learned very much and very many things at these dinners, but more particularly did I become familiarised with the habits of mind of such men as Neal, Crupp, Gane, and the one or two other New Imperialists who belonged to us. They were nearly all, like Bailey, Oxford men, though mostly of a younger generation, and they were all mysteriously and inexplicably advocates of Tariff Reform, as if it were the principal instead of at best a secondary aspect of constructive policy. They seemed obsessed by the idea that streams of trade could be diverted violently so as to link the parts of the Empire by common interests, and they were persuaded, I still think mistakenly, that Tariff Reform would have an immense popular appeal. They were also very keen on military organisation, and with a curious little martinet twist in their minds that boded ill for that side of public liberty. So much against them. But they were disposed to spend money much more generously on education and research of all sorts than our formless host of Liberals seemed likely to do; and they were altogether more accessible than the Young Liberals to bold, constructive ideas affecting the universities and upper classes. The Liberals are abjectly afraid of the universities. I found myself constantly falling in line with these men in our discussions, and more and more hostile to Dayton's sentimentalising evasions of definite schemes and Minns's trust in such things as the "Spirit of our People" and the "General Trend of Progress." It wasn't that I thought them very much righter than their opponents; I believe all definite party "sides" at any time are bound to be about equally right and equally lop-sided; but that I thought I could get more out of them, and what was more important to me, more out of myself if I co-operated with them. By 1908 I had already arrived at a point where I could be definitely considering a transfer of my political allegiance.

These abstract questions are inseparably interwoven with my memory of a shining long white table, and our hock bottles and burgundy bottles, and bottles of Perrier and St. Galmier and the disturbed central trophy of dessert, and scattered glasses and nut-shells and cigarette-ends and menu-cards used for memoranda. I see old Dayton sitting back and cocking his eye to the ceiling in a way he had while he threw warmth into the ancient platitudes of Liberalism, and Minns leaning forward, and a little like a cockatoo with a taste for confidences, telling us in a hushed voice of his faith in the Destiny of Mankind. Thorns lounges, rolling his round face and

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round eyes from speaker to speaker and sounding the visible depths of misery whenever Neal begins. Gerbault and Gane were given to conversation in undertones, and Bailey pursued mysterious purposes in lisping whispers. It was Crupp attracted me most. He had, as people say, his eye on me from the beginning. He used to speak at me, and drifted into a custom of coming home with me very regularly for an after-talk.

He opened his heart to me.

"Neither of us," he said, "are dukes, and neither of us are horny-handed sons of toil. We want to get hold of the handles, and to do that, one must go where the power is, and give it just as constructive a twist as we can. That's *my* Toryism."

"Is it Kindling's—or Gerbault's?"

"No. But theirs is soft, and mine's hard. Mine will wear theirs out. You and I and Bailey are all after the same thing, and why aren't we working together?"

"Are you a Confederate?" I asked suddenly.

"That's a secret nobody tells," he said.

"What are the Confederates after?"

"Making aristocracy work, I suppose. Just as, I gather, *you* want to do. . . ."

The Confederates were being heard of at that time. They were at once attractive and repellent to me, an odd secret society whose membership nobody knew, pledged, it was said, to impose Tariff Reform and an ample constructive policy upon the Conservatives. In the press, at any rate, they had an air of deliberately organised power. I have no doubt the rumour of them greatly influenced my ideas. . . .

In the end I made some very rapid decisions, but for nearly two years I was hesitating. Hesitations were inevitable in such a matter. I was not dealing with any simple question of principle, but with elusive and fluctuating estimates of the trend of diverse forces and of the nature of my own powers. All through that period I was asking over and over again: how far are these Confederates mere dreamers? How far—and this was more vital—are they rendering lip-service to social organisation? Is it true they desire war because it confirms the ascendency of their class? How far can Conservatism be induced to plan and construct before it resists the thrust towards change. Is it really in bulk anything more than a mass of prejudice and conceit, cynical indulgence, and a hard suspicion of and hostility to the expropriated classes in the community?

That is a research which yields no statistics, an inquiry like asking what is the ruling colour of a chameleon. The shadowy answer varied with my health, varied with my mood and the conduct of the people I was watching. How fine can people be? How generous—not incidentally, but all round? How far can you educate sons beyond the outlook of their fathers, and how far lift a rich, proud, self-indulgent class above the protests of its business agents and solicitors and its own habits and vanity? Is chivalry in a class possible?—was it ever, indeed, or will it ever be possible? Is the progress that seems attainable in certain directions worth the retrogression that may be its price?

§ 4. It was to the Pentagram Circle that I first broached the new conceptions that were developing in my mind. I count the evening of my

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paper the beginning of the movement that created the *Blue Weekly* and our wing of the present New Tory party. I do that without any excessive egotism, because my essay was no solitary man's production; it was my reaction to forces that had come to me very largely through my fellow-members; its quick reception by them showed that I was, so to speak, merely the first of the chestnuts to pop. The atmospheric quality of the evening stands out very vividly in my memory. The night, I remember, was warmly foggy when after midnight we went to finish our talk at my house.

We had recently changed the rules of the club to admit visitors, and so it happened that I had brought Britten, and Crupp introduced Arnold Shoesmith, my former schoolfellow at City Merchants', and now the wealthy successor of his father and elder brother. I remember his heavy, inexpressively handsome face lighting to his rare smile at the sight of me, and how little I dreamt of the entanglement that was to involve us both. Gane was present, and Esmeer, a newly added member, but I think Bailey was absent. Either he was absent, or he said something so entirely characteristic and undistinguished that it has left no impression on my mind.

I had broken a little from the traditions of the club even in my title, which was deliberately a challenge to the Liberal idea: it was, "The World Exists for Exceptional People." It is not the title I should choose now—for since that time I have got my phrase of "mental hinterlander" into journalistic use. I should say now, "The World Exists for Mental Hinterland."

The notes I made of that opening have long since vanished with a thousand other papers, but some odd chance has preserved and brought with me to Italy the menu for the evening, its back black with the scrawled notes I made of the discussion for my reply. I found it the other day among some letters from Margaret and a copy of the 1909 Report of the Poor Law Commission, also rich with pencilled marginalia.

My opening was a criticism of the democratic idea and method, upon lines such as I have already sufficiently indicated in the preceding sections. I remember how old Dayton fretted in his chair, and tushed and pished at that, even as I gave it, and afterwards we were treated to one of his platitudinous harangues, he sitting back in his chair with that small obstinate eye of his fixed on the ceiling, and a sort of cadaverous glow upon his face, repeating—quite regardless of all my reasoning and all that had been said by others in the debate—the sacred empty phrases that were his soul's refuge from reality. "You may think it very clever," he said, with a nod of his head to mark his sense of his point, "not to Trust in the People. *I* do." And so on. Nothing in his life or work had ever shown that he did trust in the people, but that was beside the mark. He was the party Liberal and these were the party incantations.

After my preliminary attack on vague democracy I went on to show that all human life was virtually aristocratic; people must either recognise aristocracy in general or else follow leaders, which is aristocracy in particular, and so I came to my point that the reality of human progress lay necessarily through the establishment of freedoms for the human best and a collective receptivity and understanding. There was a disgusted grunt from Dayton, "Superman rubbish—Nietzsche. Shaw!

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Ugh!" I sailed on over him to my next propositions. The prime essential in a progressive civilisation was the establishment of a more effective process for the privilege of higher education, and the very highest educational opportunity for the educable. We were too apt to patronise scholarship winners, as though a scholarship was toffee given as a reward for virtue. It wasn't any reward at all; it was an invitation to capacity. We had no more right to drag in virtue, or any merit but quality, than we had to involve it in a search for the tallest man. We didn't want a mere process for the selection of good as distinguished from gifted and able boys —"No, you *don't*," from Dayton—we wanted all the brilliant stuff in the world concentrated upon the development of the world. Just to exasperate Dayton further I put in a plea for gifts as against character in educational, artistic, and legislative work. "Good teaching," I said, "is better than good conduct. We are becoming idiotic about character."

Dayton was too moved to speak. He slewed round upon me an eye of agonised aversion.

I expatiated on the small proportion of the available ability that is really serving humanity to-day. "I suppose to-day all the thought, all the art, all the increments of knowledge that matter, are supplied so far as the English-speaking community is concerned by—how many?—by three or four thousand individuals." ("Less," said Thorns.) "By, to be more precise, the mental hinterlands of three or four thousand individuals. We who know some of the band entertain no illusions as to their innate rarity. We know that they are just the few out of many, the few who got in our world of chance and confusion, the timely stimulus, the apt suggestion at the fortunate moment, the needed training, the leisure. The rest are lost in the crowd, fail through the defects of their qualities, become commonplace workmen and second-rate professional men, marry commonplace wives, are as much waste as the driftage of superfluous pollen in a pine forest is waste."

"Decent honest lives!" said Dayton to his bread-crumbs, with his chin in his necktie. "*Waste!*"

"And the people who do get what we call opportunity get it usually in extremely limited and cramping forms. No man lives a life of intellectual productivity alone; he needs not only material and opportunity, but helpers, resonators. Round and about what I might call the *real* men, you want the sympathetic co-operators, who help by understanding. It isn't that our—*salt* of three or four thousand is needlessly rare; it is sustained by far too small and undifferentiated a public. Most of the good men we know are not really doing the very best work of their gifts; nearly all are a little adapted, most are shockingly adapted to some second-best use. Now, I take it, this is the very centre and origin of the muddle, futility, and unhappiness that distresses us; it's the cardinal problem of the State—to discover, develop, and use the exceptional gifts of men. And I see that best done—I drift more and more away from the common stuff of legislative and administrative activity—by a quite revolutionary development of the educational machinery, by a still more unprecedented attempt to keep science going, to keep literature going, and to keep what is the necessary spur of all science and literature, an intelligent and appreciative criticism going. You know none of these things have ever been kept going hitherto; they've come unexpectedly and inexplicably."

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"Hear, hear!" from Dayton, cough, nodding of the head, and an expression of mystical profundity.

"They've lit up a civilisation and vanished, to give place to darkness again. Now the modern State doesn't mean to go back to darkness again—and so it's got to keep its light burning." I went on to attack the present organisation of our schools and universities, which seemed elaborately designed to turn the well-behaved, uncritical, and uncreative men of each generation into the authoritative leaders of the next, and I suggested remedies upon lines that I have already indicated in the earlier chapters of this story. . . .

So far I had the substance of the club with me, but I opened new ground and set Crupp agog by confessing my doubt from which party or combination of groups these developments of science and literature and educational organisation could most reasonably be expected. I looked up to find Crupp's dark little eye intent upon me.

There I left it to them.

We had an astonishingly good discussion; Neal burst once, but we emerged from his flood after a time, and Dayton had his interlude. The rest was all close, keen examination of my problem.

I see Crupp now with his arm bent before him on the table in a way he had, as though it was jointed throughout its length like a lobster's antenna, his plump, short-fingered hand crushing up a walnut-shell into smaller and smaller fragments. "Remington," he said, "has given us the data for a movement, a really possible movement. It's not only possible, but necessary—urgently necessary, I think, if the Empire is to go on."

"We're working altogether too much at the social basement in education and training," said Gane. "Remington is right about our neglect of the higher levels."

Britten made a good contribution with an analysis of what he called the spirit of a country and what made it. "The modern community needs its serious men to be artistic and its artists to be taken seriously," I remember his saying. "The day has gone by for either dull responsibility or merely witty art."

I remember very vividly how Shoesmith harped on an idea I had thrown out of using some sort of review or weekly to express and elaborate these conceptions of a new, severer, aristocratic culture.

"It would have to be done amazingly well," said Britten, and my mind went back to my school days and that ancient enterprise of ours, and how Cossington had rushed it. Well, Cossington had too many papers nowadays to interfere with us, and we perhaps had learnt some defensive devices.

"But this thing has to be linked to some political party," said Crupp, with his eye on me. "You can't get away from that. The Liberals," he added, "have never done anything for research or literature."

"They had a Royal Commission on the Dramatic Censorship," said Thorns, with a note of minute fairness. "It shows what they were made of," he added.

"It's what I've told Remington again and again," said Crupp, "we've got to pick up the tradition of aristocracy, reorganise it, and make it work. But he's certainly suggested a method."

"There won't be much aristocracy to pick up," said Dayton darkly to the ceiling, "if the House of Lords throws out the Budget."

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"All the more reason for picking it up," said Neal. "For we can't do without it."

"Will they go to the bad, or will they rise from the ashes, aristocrats indeed—if the Liberals come in overwhelmingly?" said Britten.

"It's we who might decide that," said Crupp insidiously.

"I agree," said Gane.

"No one can tell," said Thorns. "I doubt if they will get beaten."

It was an odd, fragmentary discussion that night. We were all with ideas in our minds at once fine and imperfect. We threw out suggestions that showed themselves at once for inadequate, and we tried to qualify them by minor self-contradictions. Britten, I think, got more said than any one. "You all seem to think you want to organise people, particular groups and classes of individuals," he insisted. "It isn't that. That's the standing error of politicians. You want to organise a culture. Civilisation isn't a matter of concrete groupings; it's a matter of prevailing ideas. The problem is how to make bold, clear ideas prevail. The question for Remington and us is just what groups of people will most help this culture forward."

"Yes, but how are the Lords going to behave?" said Crupp. "You yourself were asking that a little while ago."

"If they win or if they lose," Gane maintained, "there will be a movement to reorganise aristocracy—Reform of the House of Lords, they'll call the political form of it."

"Bailey thinks that," said some one.

"The labour people want abolition," said some one.

"Let 'em," said Thorns.

He became audible, sketching a possible line of action.

"Suppose all of us were able to work together. It's just one of those undeterminate, confused, eventful times ahead when a steady jet of ideas might produce enormous results."

"Leave me out of it," said Dayton, "*if* you please."

"We should," said Thorns under his breath.

I took up Crupp's initiative, I remember, and expanded it.

"I believe we could do—extensive things," I insisted.

"Revivals and revisions of Toryism have been tried so often," said Thorns, "from the Young England movement onward."

"Not one but has produced its enduring effects," I said. "It's the peculiarity of English Conservatism that it's persistently progressive and rejuvenescent."

I think it must have been about that point that Dayton fled our presence, after some clumsy sentence that I decided upon reflection was intended to remind me of my duty to my party.

Then I remember Thorns firing doubts at me obliquely across the table. "You can't run a country through its spoilt children," he said. "What you call aristocrats are really spoilt children. They've had too much of everything, except bracing experience."

"Children can always be educated," said Crupp.

"I said *spoilt* children," said Thorns.

"Look here, Thorns!" said I. "If this Budget row leads to a storm, and these big people get their power clipped, what's going to happen? Have you thought of that? When they go out lock, stock, and barrel, who comes in?"

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"Nature abhors a Vacuum," said Crupp, supporting me.

"Bailey's trained officials," suggested Gane.

"Quacks with a certificate of approval from Altiora," said Thorns. "I admit the horrors of the alternative. There'd be a massacre in three years."

"One may go on trying possibilities for ever," I said. "One thing emerges. Whatever accidents happen, our civilisation needs, and almost consciously needs, a culture of fine creative minds, and all the necessary tolerances, opennesses, considerations, that march with that. For my own part, I think that is The Most Vital Thing. Build your ship of State as you will; get your men as you will; I concentrate on what is clearly my affair—I want to ensure the quality of the quarter deck."

"Hear, hear!" said Shoesmith suddenly—his first remark for a long time. "A first-rate figure," said Shoesmith, gripping it.

"Our danger is in missing that," I went on. "Muddle isn't ended by transferring power from the muddle-headed few to the muddle-headed many, and then cheating the many out of it again in the interests of a bureaucracy of sham experts. But that seems the limit of the liberal imagination. There is no real progress in a country, except a rise in the level of its free intellectual activity. All other progress is secondary and dependent. If you take on Bailey's dreams of efficient machinery, and a sort of fanatical discipline, with no free-moving brains behind it, confused ugliness becomes rigid ugliness—that's all. No doubt things are moving from looseness to discipline, and from irresponsible controls to organised controls—and also and rather contrariwise everything is becoming as people say, democratised; but all the more need in that, for an ark in which the living element may be saved."

"Hear, hear!" said Shoesmith, faint but pursuing.

It must have been in my house afterwards that Shoesmith became noticeable. He seemed trying to say something vague and difficult that he didn't get said at all on that occasion. "We could do immense things with a weekly," he repeated, echoing Neal, I think. And there he left off and became a mute expressiveness, and it was only afterwards, when I was in bed, that I saw we had our capitalist in our hands. . . .

We parted that night on my doorstep in a tremendous glow—but in that sort of glow one doesn't act upon without much reconsideration, and it was some months before I made my decision to follow up the indications of that opening talk.

§ 5. I find my thoughts lingering about the Pentagram Circle. In my development it played a large part, not so much by starting new trains of thought as by confirming the practicability of things I had already hesitatingly entertained. Discussion with these other men so prominently involved in current affairs endorsed views that otherwise would have seemed only a little less remote from actuality than the Guardians of Plato or the labour laws of More. Among other questions that were never very distant from our discussions, that came apt to every topic, was the true significance of democracy, Tariff Reform as a method of international hostility, and the imminence of war. On the first issue I can still recall little Bailey, glib and winking, explaining that democracy was really just a dodge for getting assent to the ordinances of the expert official by means

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of the polling-booth. "If they don't like things," said he, "they can vote for the opposition candidate and see what happens then—and that, you see, is why we don't want proportional representation to let in the wild men." I opened my eyes—the lids had dropped for a moment under the caress of those smooth sounds—to see if Bailey's artful forefinger wasn't at the side of his excessive nose.

The international situation exercised us greatly. Our meetings were pervaded by the feeling that all things moved towards a day of reckoning with Germany, and I was largely instrumental in keeping up the suggestion that India was in a state of unstable equilibrium, that sooner or later something must happen there—something very serious to our Empire. Dayton frankly detested these topics. He was full of that old Middle Victorian persuasion that whatever is inconvenient or disagreeable to the English mind can be annihilated by not thinking about it. He used to sit low in his chair and look mulish. "Militarism," he would declare in a tone of the utmost moral fervour, "is a curse. It's an unmitigated curse." Then he would cough shortly and twitch his head back and frown, and seem astonished beyond measure that after this conclusive statement we could still go on talking of war.

All our Imperialists were obsessed by the thought of international conflict, and their influence revived for a time those uneasinesses that had been aroused in me for the first time by my continental journey with Willersley and by Meredith's "One of Our Conquerors." That quite justifiable dread of a punishment for all the slackness, mental dishonesty, presumption, mercenary respectability and sentimentalised commercialism of the Victorian period, at the hands of the better organised, more vigorous, and now far more highly civilised peoples of Central Europe, seemed to me to have both a good and bad series of consequences. It seemed the only thing capable of bracing English minds to education, sustained constructive effort and research; but on the other hand it produced the quality of panic, hasty preparation, impatience of thought, a wasteful and sometimes quite futile immediacy. In 1909, for example, there was a vast clamour for eight additional "Dreadnoughts"—

> We want eight
> And we won't wait,—

but no clamour at all about our national waste of inventive talent, our mean standard of intellectual attainment, our disingenuous criticism, and the consequent failure to distinguish men of the quality needed to carry on the modern type of war. Almost universally we have the wrong men in our places of responsibility and the right men in no place at all, almost universally we have poorly qualified, hesitating, and resentful subordinates, because our criticism is worthless and, so habitually as to be now almost unconsciously, dishonest. Germany is beating England in every matter upon which competition is possible, because she attended sedulously to her collective mind for sixty pregnant years, because in spite of tremendous defects she is still far more anxious for quality in achievement than we are. I remember saying that in my paper. From that, I remember, I went on to an image that had flashed into my mind. "The British Empire," I said, "is like some of those early vertebrated monsters, the Brontosaurus and the Atlantosaurus and such-like; it sacrifices intellect to character; its back-

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bone, that is to say—especially in the visceral region—is bigger than its cranium. It's no accident that things are so. We've worked for backbone. We brag about backbone, and if the joints are anchylosed so much the better. Roosevelt and Rosebery have long been clamouring for more backbone in the last two months. *Their* remedy for mental stodginess is to swallow the poker. We're still but only half awake to our error. You can't change that suddenly."

"Turn it round and make it go backwards," interjected Thorns.

"It's trying to do that," I said, "in places."

And afterwards Crupp declared I had begotten a nightmare which haunted him of nights; he was trying desperately and belatedly to blow a brain as one blows soap-bubbles on such a mezozoic saurian as I had conjured up, while the clumsy monster's face, all teeth and brains, crept nearer and nearer. . . .

I've grown, I think, since those days out of the urgency of that apprehension. I still think a European war, and conceivably a very humiliating war for England, may occur at no very distant date, but I do not think there is any such heroic quality in our governing class as will make that war catastrophic. The prevailing spirit in English life—so far it has been the prevailing spirit of all imperialised peoples—is one of underbred aggression in prosperity and diplomatic compromise in moments of danger; we bully haughtily where we can and assimilate where we must. It is not for nothing that our upper- and middle-class youth is educated by teachers of the highest character, scholars and gentlemen, men who can pretend quite honestly that Darwinism hasn't upset the historical fall of man, that cricket is moral training, and that Socialism is an outrage upon the teachings of Christ. A sort of dignified dexterity of evasion is the national reward. Germany, with a larger population, a vigorous and irreconcilable proletariat, a bolder intellectual training, a harsher spirit, can scarcely fail to drive us at last to a realisation of intolerable strain. So we may never fight at all. The war of preparations that has been going on for thirty years may end like a sham-fight at last in an umpire's decision. We shall proudly but very firmly take the second place. For my own part, since I love England as much as I detest her present lethargy of soul, I pray for a chastening war—I wouldn't mind her flag in the dirt if only her spirit would come out of it. So I was able to shake off that earlier fear of some final and irrevocable destruction truncating all my schemes. At the most, a European war would be a dramatic episode in the reconstruction I had in view.

In India, too, I no longer foresee, as once I was inclined to see, disaster. The English rule in India is surely one of the more extraordinary accidents that has ever happened in history. We are there like a man who has fallen off a ladder on to the neck of an elephant, and doesn't know what to do or how to get down. Until something happens he remains. Our functions in India are absurd. We English do not own that country, do not even rule it. We make nothing happen; at the most we prevent things happening. We suppress our own literature there. Most English people cannot even go to this land they possess; the authorities would prevent it. If Messrs. Perowne or Cook organised a cheap tour of Manchester operatives it would be stopped. No one dare bring the average English voter face to face with the reality of India, or let the Indian native have a glimpse of the

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English voter. In my time I have talked to English statesmen, Indian officials and ex-officials, viceroys, soldiers, every one who might be supposed to know what India signifies, and I have prayed them to tell me what they thought we were up to there. I am not writing without my book in these matters. And beyond a phrase or so about "even-handed justice"—and look at our sedition trials!—they told me nothing. Time after time I have heard of that apocryphal native ruler in the north-west, who, when asked what would happen if we left India, replied that in a week his men would be in the saddle, and in six months not a rupee nor a virgin would be left in Lower Bengal. That is always given as our conclusive justification. But is it our business to preserve the rupees and virgins of Lower Bengal in a sort of magic inconclusiveness? Better plunder than paralysis, better fire and sword than futility. Our flag is spread over the peninsula, without plans, without intentions—a vast preventive. The sum total of our policy is to arrest any discussion, any conferences that would enable the Indians to work out a tolerable scheme of the future for themselves. But that does not arrest the resentment of men held back from life. Consider what it must be for the educated Indian sitting at the feast of contemporary possibilities with his mouth gagged and his hands bound behind him! The spirit of insurrection breaks out in spite of espionage and seizures. Our conflict for inaction develops stupendous absurdities. The other day the British Empire was taking off and examining printed cotton stomach wraps for seditious emblems and inscriptions. . . .

In some manner we shall have to come out of India. We have had our chance, and we have demonstrated nothing but the appalling dulness of our national imagination. We are not good enough to do anything with India. Codger and Flack, and Gates and Dayton, Cladingbowl in the club, and the *Home Churchman* in the home, cant about "character," worship of strenuous force and contempt of truth; for the sake of such men and things as these, we must abandon in fact, if not in appearance, that empty domination. Had we great schools and a powerful teaching, could we boast great men, had we the spirit of truth and creation in our lives, then indeed it might be different. But a race that bears a sceptre must carry gifts to justify it.

It does not follow that we shall be driven catastrophically from India. That was my earlier mistake. We are not proud enough in our bones to be ruined by India as Spain was by her empire. We may be able to abandon India with an air of still remaining there. It is our new method. We train our future rulers in the public schools to have a very wholesome respect for strength, and as soon as a power arises in India in spite of us, be it a man or a culture or a native State, we shall be willing to deal with it. We may or may not have a war, but our governing class will be quick to learn when we are beaten. Then they will repeat our South African diplomacy, and arrange for some settlement that will abandon the reality, such as it is, and preserve the semblance of power. The conqueror *de facto* will become the new "loyal Briton," and the democracy at home will be invited to celebrate our recession—triumphantly. I am no believer in the imminent dissolution of our Empire; I am less and less inclined to see in either India or Germany the probability of an abrupt truncation of those slow intellectual constructions which are the essentials of statecraft.

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§ 6. I sit writing in this loggia to the sound of dripping water—this morning we had rain, and the roof of our little casa is still not dry, there are pools in the rocks under the sweet chestnuts, and the torrent that crosses the salita is full and boastful—and I try to recall the order of my impressions during that watching, dubious time, before I went over to the Conservative party. I was trying—chaotic task!—to gauge the possibilities inherent in the quality of the British aristocracy. There comes a broad spectacular effect of wide parks, diversified by woods and bracken valleys, and dappled with deer; of great smooth lawns shaded by ancient trees; of big façades of sunlit building dominating the country-side; of large fine rooms full of handsome, easy-mannered people. As a sort of representative picture to set off against those other pictures of Liberals and of Socialists I have given, I recall one of those huge assemblies the Duchess of Clynes inaugurated at Stamford House. The place itself is one of the vastest private houses in London, a huge clustering mass of white and gold saloons with polished floors and wonderful pictures, and staircases and galleries on a Gargantuan scale. And there she sought to gather all that was most representative of English activities, and did in fact, in those brilliant nocturnal crowds, get samples of nearly every section of our social and intellectual life, with a marked predominance upon the political and social side.

I remember sitting in one of the recesses at the end of the big saloon with Mrs. Redmondson, one of those sharp-minded, beautiful rich women one meets so often in London, who seem to have done nothing and to be capable of everything, and we watched the crowd—uniforms and splendours were streaming in from a State ball—and exchanged information. I told her about the politicians and intellectuals, and she told me about the aristocrats, and we sharpened our wit on them and counted the percentage of beautiful people among the latter, and wondered if the general effect of tallness was or was not an illusion.

They were, we agreed, for the most part bigger than the average of people in London, and a handsome lot, even when they were not subtly individualised. "They look so well nurtured," I said, "well cared for. I like their quiet, well-trained movements, their pleasant consideration for each other."

"Kindly, good-tempered, and at bottom utterly selfish," she said, "like big, rather carefully trained, rather pampered children. What else can you expect from them?"

"They are good-tempered, anyhow," I witnessed, "and that's an achievement. I don't think I could ever be content under a bad-tempered, sentimentalising, strenuous Government. That's why I couldn't stand the Roosevelt *régime* in America. One's chief surprise when one comes across these big people for the first time is their admirable easiness and a real personal modesty. I confess I admire them. Oh! I like them. I wouldn't at all mind, I believe, giving over the country to this aristocracy—given *something*——"

"Which they haven't got."

"Which they haven't got—or they'd be the finest sort of people in the world."

"That something?" she inquired.

"I don't know. I've been puzzling my wits to know. They've done all sorts of things——"

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"That's Lord Wrassleton," she interrupted, "whose leg was broken—you remember?—at Spion Kop."

"It's healed very well. I like the gold lace and the white glove resting, with quite a nice awkwardness, on the sword. When I was a little boy I wanted to wear clothes like that. And the stars! He's got the V.C. Most of these people here have at any rate shown pluck, you know—brought something off."

"Not quite enough," she suggested.

"I think that's it," I said. "Not quite enough—not quite hard enough," I added.

She laughed and looked at me. "You'd like to make us," she said.

"What?"

"Hard."

"I don't think you'll go on if you don't get hard."

"We shan't be so pleasant if we do."

"Well, there my puzzled wits come in again. I don't see why an aristocracy shouldn't be rather hard trained, and yet kindly. I'm not convinced that the resources of education are exhausted. I want to better this, because it already looks so good."

"How are we to do it?" asked Mrs. Redmondson.

"Oh, there you have me! I've been spending my time lately in trying to answer that! It makes me quarrel with"—I held up my fingers and ticked the items off—"the public schools, the private tutors, the army exams, the Universities, the Church, the general attitude of the country towards science and literature——"

"We all do," said Mrs. Redmondson. "We can't begin again at the beginning," she added.

"Couldn't one," I nodded at the assembly in general, "start a movement?"

"There's the Confederates," she said, with a faint smile that masked a gleam of curiosity. . . . "You want," she said, "to say to the aristocracy, 'Be aristocrats. *Noblesse oblige*.' Do you remember what happened to the monarch who was told to 'Be a King'?"

"Well," I said, "I want an aristocracy."

"This," she said, smiling, "is the pick of them. The backwoodsmen are off the stage. These are the brilliant ones—the smart and the blue. . . . They cost a lot of money, you know."

So far Mrs. Redmondson, but the picture remained full of things not stated in our speech. They were on the whole handsome people, charitable-minded, happy, and easy. They led spacious lives, and there was something free and fearless about their bearing that I liked extremely. The women particularly were wide-reading, fine-thinking. Mrs. Redmondson talked as fully and widely and boldly as a man, and with those flashes of intuition, those startling, sudden delicacies of perception few men display. I liked, too, the relations that held between women and men, their general tolerance, their antagonism to the harsh jealousies that are the essence of the middle-class order. . . .

After all, if one's game resolved itself into the development of a type and culture of men, why shouldn't one begin at this end?

§ 7. It is very easy indeed to generalise about a class of human beings

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but much harder to produce a sample. Was old Lady Forthundred, for instance, fairly a sample? I remember her as a smiling, magnificent presence, a towering accumulation of figure and wonderful shimmering blue silk and black lace and black hair, and small fine features and chins and chins and chins, disposed in a big cane chair with wraps and cushions upon the great terrace of Champneys. Her eye was blue and hard, and her accent and intonation were exactly what you would expect from a rather commonplace dressmaker pretending to be aristocratic. I was, I am afraid, posing a little as the intelligent but respectful inquirer from below investigating the great world, and she was certainly posing as my informant. She affected a cynical coarseness. She developed a theory on the governance of England, beautifully frank and simple. "Give 'um all a peerage when they get twenty thousand a year," she maintained. "That's my remedy."

In my new *rôle* of theoretical aristocrat I felt a little abashed.

"Twenty thousand," she repeated with conviction.

It occurred to me that I was in the presence of the aristocratic theory currently working as distinguished from my as yet unformulated intentions.

"You'll get a lot of loafers and scamps among 'um," said Lady Forthundred. "You get loafers and scamps everywhere, but you'll get a lot of men who'll work hard to keep things together, and that's what we're all after, isn't ut?"

"It's not an ideal arrangement."

"Tell me anything better," said Lady Forthundred.

On the whole, and because she refused emphatically to believe in education, Lady Forthundred scored.

We had been discussing Cossington's recent peerage, for Cossington, my old schoolfellow at City Merchants', and my victor in the affair of the magazine, had clambered to an amazing wealth up a piled heap of energetically pushed penny and halfpenny magazines, and a group of daily newspapers. I had expected to find the great lady hostile to the newcomer, but she accepted him, she glorified in him.

"We're a peerage," she said, "but none of us have ever had any nonsense about nobility."

She turned and smiled down on me. "We English," she said, "are a practical people. We assimilate 'um."

"Then, I suppose, they don't give trouble?"

"Then they don't give trouble."

"They learn to shoot?"

"And all that," said Lady Forthundred. "Yes, And things go on. Sometimes better than others, but they go on—somehow. It depends very much on the sort of butler who pokes 'um about."

I suggested that it might be possible to get a secure twenty thousand a year by at least detrimental methods—socially speaking.

"We must take the bad and the good of 'um," said Lady Forthundred courageously. . . .

Now, was she a sample? It happened she talked. What was there in the brains of the multitude of her first, second, third, fourth, and fifth cousins, who didn't talk, who shone tall, and bearing themselves finely, against a background of deft, attentive maids and valets, on every spacious social scene? How did things look to them?

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§ 8. Side by side with Lady Forthundred, it is curious to put Evesham with his tall, bent body, his little-featured, almost elvish face, his unequal mild brown eyes, his gentle manner, his sweet, amazing oratory. He led all these people wonderfully. He was always curious and interested about life, wary beneath a pleasing frankness—and I tormented my brain to get to the bottom of him. For a long time he was the most powerful man in England under the throne; he had the Lords in his hand, and a great majority in the Commons, and the discontents and intrigues that are the concomitants of an overwhelming party advantage broke against him as waves break against a cliff. He foresaw so far in these matters that it seemed he scarcely troubled to foresee. He brought political art to the last triumph of naturalness. Always for me he has been the typical aristocrat, so typical and above the mere forms of aristocracy that he remained a commoner to the end of his days.

I had met him at the beginning of my career; he read some early papers of mine, and asked to see me, and I conceived a flattered liking for him that strengthened to a very strong feeling indeed. He seemed to me to stand alone without an equal, the greatest man in British political life. Some men one sees through and understands, some one cannot see into or round because they are of opaque clay, but about Evesham I had a sense of things hidden as it were by depth and mists, because he was so big and atmospheric a personality. No other contemporary has had that effect upon me. I've sat beside him at dinners, stayed in houses with him—he was in the big house-party at Champneys—talked to him, sounded him, watching him as I sat beside him. I could talk to him with extraordinary freedom and a rare sense of being understood. Other men have to be treated in a special manner; approached through their own mental dialect, flattered by a minute regard for what they have said and done. Evesham was as widely and charitably receptive as any man I have ever met. The common politicians beside him seemed like rows of stuffy little rooms looking out upon the sea.

And what was he up to? What did *he* think we were doing with Mankind? That I thought worth knowing.

I remember his talking on one occasion at the Hartsteins', at a dinner so tremendously floriferous and equipped that we were almost forced into duologues, about the possible common constructive purpose in politics.

"I feel so much," he said, "that the best people in every party converge. We don't differ at Westminster as they do in the county towns. There's a sort of extending common policy that goes on under every government, because on the whole it's the right thing to do, and people know it. Things that used to be matters of opinion become matters of science—and cease to be party questions."

He instanced education.

"Apart," said I, "from the religious question."

"Apart from the religious question."

He dropped that aspect with an easy grace, and went on with his general theme that political conflict was the outcome of uncertainty. "Directly you get a thing established, so that people can say, 'Now this is Right,' with the same conviction that people can say water is a combination of oxygen and hydrogen, there's no more to be said. The thing has to be done. . . ."

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And to put against this effect of Evesham, broad and humanely tolerant, posing as the minister of a steadily developing constructive conviction, there are other memories.

Have I not seen him in the house, persistent, persuasive, indefatigable, and by all my standards wickedly perverse, leaning over the table with those insistent movements of his hand upon it, or swaying forward with a grip upon his coat lapel, fighting with a diabolical skill to preserve what are in effect religious tests, tests he must have known would outrage and humiliate and injure the consciences of a quarter—and that perhaps the best quarter—of the youngsters who come to the work of elementary education?

In playing for points in the game of party advantage Evesham displayed at times a quite wicked unscrupulousness in the use of his subtle mind. I would sit and watch him, and listen to his urbane and wonderfully modulated voice, fascinated by him. Did he really care? Did anything matter to him? And if it really mattered nothing, why did he trouble to serve the narrowness and passion of his side? Or did he see far beyond my scope, so that this petty iniquity was justified by greater, remoter ends of which I had no intimation?

They accused him of nepotism. His friends and family were certainly well cared for. In private life he was full of an affectionate intimacy; he pleased by being charmed and pleased. One might think at times there was no more of him than a clever man happily circumstanced, and finding an interest and occupation in politics. And then came a glimpse of thought, of imagination, like the sight of a soaring eagle through a staircase skylight. Oh, beyond question he was great! No other contemporary politician had his quality. In no man have I perceived so sympathetically the great contrast between warm, personal things and the white dream of statecraft. Except that he had it seemed no hot passions, but only interests and fine affections and indolences, he paralleled the conflict of my life. He saw and thought widely and deeply; but at times it seemed to me his greatness stood over and behind the reality of his life, like some splendid servant, thinking his own thoughts, who waits behind a lesser master's chair. . . .

§ 9. Of course, when Evesham talked of this ideal of the organised State becoming so finely true to practicability and so clearly stated as to have the compelling conviction of physical science, he spoke quite after my heart. Had he really embodied the attempt to realise that, I could have done no more than follow him blindly. But neither he nor I embodied that, and there lies the gist of my story. And when it came to a study of others among the leading Tories and Imperialists the doubt increased, until with some at last it was possible to question whether they had any imaginative conception of constructive statecraft at all; whether they didn't opaquely accept the world for what it was, and set themselves single-mindedly to make a place for themselves and cut a figure in it.

There were some very fine personalities among them; there were the great peers who had administered Egypt, India, South Africa—Cromer, Kitchener, Curzon, Milner, Gane, for example. So far as that easier task of holding sword and scales had gone, they had shown the finest qualities, but they had returned to the far more perplexing and exacting problem of the home country, a little glorious, a little too

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simply bold. They wanted to arm and they wanted to educate, but the habit of immediate necessity made them far more eager to arm than to educate, and their experience of heterogeneous controls made them overrate the need for obedience in a homogeneous country. They didn't understand raw men, ill-trained men, uncertain minds, and intelligent women; and these are the things that matter in England. . . . There were also the great business adventurers, from Cranber to Cossington (who was now Lord Paddockhurst). My mind remained unsettled, and went up and down the scale between a belief in their far-sighted purpose and the perception of crude vanities, coarse ambitions, vulgar competitiveness, and a mere habitual persistence in the pursuit of gain. For a time I saw a good deal of Cossington—I wish I had kept a diary of his talk and gestures, to mark how he could vary from day to day between a *poseur*, a smart tradesman, and a very bold and wide-thinking political schemer. He had a vanity of sweeping actions, of motor-car pounces, and Napoleonic rushes that led to violent ineffectual changes in the policy of his papers, and a haunting pursuit by parallel columns in the Liberal press that never abashed him in the slightest degree. By an accident I plumbed the folly in him—but I feel I never plumbed his wisdom. I remember him one day after a lunch at the Barhams' saying suddenly, out of a profound meditation over the end of a cigar, one of those sentences that seem to light the whole interior being of a man. "Some day," he said softly, rather to himself than to me, and *à propos* of nothing—"some day I will raise the country."

"Why not?" I said, after a pause, and leant across the table for the little silver spirit-lamp, to light myself a cigarette. . . .

Then the Tories had for another section the ancient creations, and again there were the financial peers, men accustomed to reserve, and their big lawyers, accustomed to—well, qualified statement. And below the giant personalities of the party were the young bloods, young, adventurous men of the type of Lord Tarvrille, who had seen service in South Africa, who had travelled and hunted; explorers, keen motorists, interested in aviation, active in army organisation. Good, brown-faced stuff they were, but impervious to ideas outside the range of their activities, more ignorant of science than their chauffeurs and of the quality of English people than welt-politicians; contemptuous of school and university by reason of the Gateses and Flacks and Codgers who had come their way; witty, light-hearted, patriotic at the Kipling level, with a certain aptitude for bullying. They varied in insensible gradations between the noble sportsmen on the one hand, and men like Gane and the Tories of our Pentagram Circle on the other. You perceive how a man might exercise his mind in the attempt to strike an average of public serviceability in the miscellany. And mixed up with these, mixed up sometimes in the same man, was the pure reactionary, whose predominant idea was that the village schools should confine themselves to teaching the catechism, hat-touching and curtseying, and be given a holiday whenever beaters were in request. . . .

I find now in my mind as a sort of counterpoise to Evesham the figure of old Lord Wardingham, asleep in the largest arm-chair in the library of Stamford Court after lunch. One foot rested on one of those things—I think they are called gout stools. He had been playing golf all the morning and wearied a weak instep; at lunch he had sat at my table and talked in

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the overbearing manner permitted to irascible important men whose insteps are painful. Among other things he had flouted the idea that women would ever understand statecraft or be more than a nuisance in politics, denied flatly that Hindoos were capable of anything whatever except excesses in population, regretted he could not censor picture galleries and circulating libraries, and declared that dissenters were people who pretended to take theology seriously with the express purpose of upsetting the entirely satisfactory compromise of the Established Church. "No sensible people, with anything to gain or lose, argue about religion," he said. "They mean mischief." Having delivered his soul upon these points and silenced the little conversation to the left of him from which they had arisen, he became after an appreciative encounter with a sanguinary woodcock, more amiable, responded to some respectful initiatives of Crupp's and related a number of classical anecdotes of those blighting snubs, vindictive retorts and scandalous miscarriages of justice that are so dear to the forensic mind. Now he reposed. He was breathing heavily with his mouth a little open and his head on one side. One whisker was turned back against the comfortable padding. His plump strong hands gripped the arms of his chair, and his frown was a little assuaged. How tremendously fed up he looked! Honours, wealth, influence, respect—he had them all. How scornful and hard it had made his unguarded expression! I note without comment that it didn't even occur to me then to wake him up and ask him what *he* was up to with mankind.

§ 10. One countervailing influence to my drift to Toryism in those days was Margaret's quite religious faith in the Liberals. I realised that slowly and with a mild astonishment. It set me, indeed, even then questioning my own change of opinion. We came at last, incidentally as our way was, to an exchange of views. It was as nearly a quarrel as we had before I came over to the Conservative side. It was at Champneys and I think during the same visit that witnessed my exploration of Lady Forthundred. It arose indirectly, I think, out of some comments of mine upon our fellow-guests, but it is one of those memories of which the scene and quality remain more vivid than the things said, a memory without any very definite beginning or end. It was afternoon in the pause between tea and the dressing-bell, and we were in Margaret's big silver-adorned, chintz bright room, looking out on the trim Italian garden. . . . Yes, the beginning of it has escaped me altogether, but I remember it as an odd, exceptional little wrangle.

At first we seem to have split upon the moral quality of the aristocracy, and I had an odd sense that in some way too feminine for me to understand our hostess had aggrieved her. She said, I know, that Champneys distressed her; made her "eager for work and reality again."

"But aren't these people real?"

"They're so superficial, so extravagant—so unreal."

I said I was not shocked by their unreality. They seemed the least affected people I had ever met. "And are they really so extravagant?" I asked, and put it to her that her dresses cost quite as much as any other woman's in the house.

"It's not only their dresses," Margaret parried. "It's the scale and spirit of things."

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I questioned that. "They're cynical," said Margaret, staring before her out of the window.

I challenged her, and she quoted the Brabants, about whom there had been an ancient scandal. She'd heard of it from Altiora, and it was also Altiora who'd given her a horror of Lord Carnaby, who was also with us. "You know his reputation," said Margaret. "That Normandy girl. Every one knows about it. I shiver when I look at him. He seems—oh! like something not of *our* civilisation. He *will* come and say little things to me."

"Offensive things?"

"No, politenesses and things. Of course his manners are—quite right. That only makes it worse, I think. It shows he might have helped—all that happened. I do all I can to make him see I don't like him. But none of the others make the slightest objection to him."

"Perhaps these people imagine something might be said for him."

"That's just it," said Margaret.

"Charity," I suggested.

"I don't like that sort of toleration."

I was oddly annoyed. "Like eating with publicans and sinners," I said. "No! . . ."

But scandals, and the contempt for rigid standards their condonation displayed, weren't more than the sharp edge of the trouble. "It's their whole position, their selfish predominance, their class conspiracy against the mass of people," said Margaret. "When I sit at dinner in that splendid room, with its glitter and white reflections and candlelight, and its flowers and its wonderful service, I seem to feel the slums and the mines and the overcrowded cottages stuffed away under the table."

I reminded Margaret that she was not altogether innocent of unearned increment.

"But aren't we doing our best to give it back?" she said.

I was moved to question her. "Do you really think," I asked, "that the Tories and peers and rich people are to blame for social injustice as we have it to-day? Do you really see politics as a struggle of light on the Liberal side against darkness on the Tory?"

"They *must* know," said Margaret.

I found myself questioning that. I see now that to Margaret it must have seemed the perversest carping against manifest things, but at the time I was concentrated simply upon the elucidation of her view and my own; I wanted to get her conception in the sharpest, hardest lines that were possible. It was perfectly clear that she saw Toryism as the diabolical element in affairs. The thing showed in its hopeless untruth all the clearer for the fine, clean emotion with which she gave it out to me. My sleeping peer in the library at Stamford Court and Evesham talking luminously behind the Hartstein flowers embodied the devil, and my replete citizen sucking at his cigar in the National Liberal Club, Willie Crampton discussing the care and management of the stomach over a specially hygienic lemonade, and Dr. Tumpany in his aggressive frock-coat pegging out a sort of copyright in Socialism, were the centre and wings of the angelic side. It was nonsense. But how was I to put the truth to her?

"I don't see things at all as you do," I said. "I don't see things in the same way."

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"Think of the poor," said Margaret, going off at a tangent.

"Think of every one," I said. "We Liberals have done more mischief through well-intentioned benevolence than all the selfishness in the world could have done. We built up the liquor interest."

"*We!*" cried Margaret. "How can you say that? It's against us."

"Naturally. But we made it a monopoly in our clumsy efforts to prevent people drinking what they liked, because it interfered with industrial regularity——"

"Oh!" cried Margaret, stung; and I could see she thought I was talking mere wickedness.

"That's it," I said.

"But would you have people drink whatever they pleased?"

"Certainly. What right have I to dictate to other men and women?"

"But think of the children!"

"Ah! there you have the folly of modern Liberalism, its half-cunning, half-silly way of getting at everything in a roundabout fashion. If neglecting children is an offence, and it *is* an offence, then deal with it as such, but don't go badgering and restricting people who sell something that may possibly in some cases lead to a neglect of children. If drunkenness is an offence, punish it, but don't punish a man for selling honest drink that perhaps after all won't make any one drunk at all. Don't intensify the viciousness of the public-house by assuming the place isn't fit for women and children. That's either spite or folly. Make the public-house fit for women and children. Make it a real public-house. If we Liberals go on as we are going, we shall presently want to stop the sale of ink and paper because those things tempt men to forgery. We do already threaten the privacy of the post because of betting touts' letters. The drift of all that kind of thing is narrow, unimaginative, mischievous, stupid. . . ."

I stopped short and walked to the window and surveyed a pretty fountain, facsimile of one in Verona, amidst trim-cut borderings of yew. Beyond, and seen between the stems of ilex-trees, was a great blaze of yellow flowers. . . .

"But prevention," I heard Margaret behind me, "is the essence of our work!"

I turned. "There's no prevention but education. There's no antiseptics in life but love and fine thinking. Make people fine, make fine people. Don't be afraid. These Tory leaders are better people individually than the average; why make them into the villains of the piece? The real villain in the piece—in the whole human drama—is muddle-headedness, and it matters very little if it's virtuous-minded or wicked. I want to get at muddle-headedness. If I could do that I would let all that you call wickedness in the world run about and do what it jolly well pleased. It would matter about as much as a slightly neglected dog—in an otherwise well-managed home."

My thoughts had run away with me.

"I can't understand you," said Margaret, in the profoundest distress. "I can't understand how it is you are coming to see things like this."

§ 11. The moods of a thinking man in politics are curiously evasive and difficult to describe. Neither the public nor the historian will permit the statesman moods. He has from the first to assume he has an Aim, a definite

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Aim, and to pretend to an absolute consistency with that. Those subtle questionings about the very fundamentals of life which plague us all so relentlessly nowadays are supposed to be silenced. He lifts his chin and pursues his Aim explicitly in the sight of all men. Those who have no real political experience can scarcely imagine the immense mental and moral strain there is between one's everyday acts and utterances on the one hand and the " thinking-out " process on the other. It is perplexingly difficult to keep in your mind, fixed and firm, a scheme essentially complex, to keep balancing a swaying possibility while at the same time under jealous, hostile, and stupid observation you tread your part in the platitudinous, quarrelsome, ill-presented march of affairs. . . .

The most impossible of all autobiographies is an intellectual autobiography. I have thrown together in the crudest way the elements of the problem I struggled with, but I can give no record of the subtle details; I can tell nothing of the long vacillations between Protean values, the talks and re-talks, the meditations, the bleak lucidities of sleepless nights. . . .

And yet these things I have struggled with must be thought out, and to begin with, they must be thought out in this muddled, experimenting way. To go into a study to think about statecraft is to turn your back on the realities you are constantly needing to feel and test and sound if your thinking is to remain vital; to choose an aim and pursue it in despite of all subsequent questionings is to bury the talent of your mind. It is no use dealing with the intricate as though it were simple, to leap haphazard at the first course of action that presents itself; the whole world of politicians is far too like a man who snatches a poker to a failing watch. It is easy to say he wants to " get something done," but the only sane thing to do is to put aside that poker and take thought and get a better implement. . . .

One of the results of these fundamental preoccupations of mine was a growing irritability towards Margaret that I found difficult to conceal. It was one of the incidental cruelties of our position that this should happen. I was in such doubt myself, that I had no power to phrase things for her in a form she could use. Hitherto I had stage-managed our " serious " conversations. Now I was too much in earnest and too uncertain to go on doing this. I avoided talk with her. Her serene, sustained confidence in vague formulæ and sentimental aspirations exasperated me; her want of sympathetic apprehension made my few efforts to indicate my changing attitudes distressing and futile. It wasn't that I was always thinking right, and that she was always saying wrong. It was that I was struggling to get hold of a difficult thing that was, at any rate, half true, and that I could not gauge how true, and that Margaret's habitual phrasing ignored these elusive elements of truth, and without premeditation fitted into the weaknesses of my new intimations, as though they had nothing but weaknesses. It was, for example, obvious that these big people, who are the backbone of Imperialism and Conservatism, are temperamentally lax, much more indolent, much more sensuous, than our deliberately virtuous Young Liberals. I didn't want to be reminded of that, just when I was in full effort to realise the finer elements in their composition. Margaret classed them and disposed of them. It was our incurable differences in habits and gestures of thought coming between us again.

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The desert of misunderstanding widened. I was forced back upon myself and my own secret councils. For a time I went my way alone; an unmixed evil for both of us. Except for that Pentagram evening, a series of talks with Isabel Rivers, who was now becoming more and more important in my intellectual life, and the arguments I maintained with Crupp, I never really opened my mind at all during that period of indecisions, slow abandonments, and slow acquisitions.

CHAPTER THE THIRD

SECESSION

§ 1. At last, out of a vast accumulation of impressions, decision distilled quite suddenly. I succumbed to Evesham and that dream of the right thing triumphant through expression. I determined I would go over to the Conservatives, and use my every gift and power to help such forces on that side as made for educational reorganisation, scientific research, literature, criticism, and intellectual development. That was in 1909. I judged the Tories were driving straight at a conflict with the country, and I thought them bound to incur a great electoral defeat. I underestimated their strength in the counties. There would follow, I calculated, a period of profound reconstruction in method and policy alike. I was entirely at one with Crupp in perceiving in this an immense opportunity for the things we desired. An aristocracy quickened by conflict and on the defensive, and full of the idea of justification by reconstruction, might prove altogether more apt for thought and high professions than Mrs. Redmondson's spoilt children. Behind the now inevitable struggle for a reform of the House of Lords, there would be great heart-searchings and eductional endeavour. On that we reckoned. . . .

At last we talked it out to the practical pitch, and Crupp and Shoesmith, and I and Gane, made our definite agreement together. . . .

I emerged from enormous silences upon Margaret one evening.

She was just back from the display of some new musicians at the Hartsteins'. I remember she wore a dress of golden satin, very rich-looking and splendid. About her slender neck there was a rope of gold-set amber beads. Her hair caught up and echoed and returned these golden notes. I, too, was in evening-dress, but where I had been escapes me—some forgotten dinner, I suppose. I went into her room. I remember I didn't speak for some moments. I went across to the window and pulled the blind aside, and looked out upon the railed garden of the square, with its shrubs and shadowed turf gleaming pallidly and irregularly in the light of the big electric standard in the corner.

"Margaret," I said, "I think I shall break with the party."

She made no answer. I turned presently, a movement of inquiry.

"I was afraid you meant to do that," she said.

"I'm out of touch," I explained. "Altogether."

"Oh! I know."

"It places me in a difficult position," I said.

Margaret stood at her dressing-table, looking steadfastly at herself in the glass, and with her fingers playing with a litter of stoppered bottles of tinted glass. "I was afraid it was coming to this," she said.

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"In a way," I said, "we've been allies. I owe my seat to you. I couldn't have gone into Parliament. . . ."

"I don't want considerations like that to affect us," she interrupted.

There was a pause. She sat down in a chair by her dressing-table, lifted an ivory hand-glass, and put it down again.

"I wish," she said, with something like a sob in her voice, "it were possible that you shouldn't do this." She stopped abruptly, and I did not look at her, because I could feel the effort she was making to control herself.

"I thought," she began again, "when you came into Parliament——"

There came another silence. "It's all gone so differently," she said. "Everything has gone so differently."

I had a sudden memory of her, shining triumphant after the Kinghamstead election, and for the first time I realised just how perplexing and disappointing my subsequent career must have been to her. But I was powerless to offer any consolation but surrender.

"I'm not doing this without consideration," I said.

"I know," she said, in a voice of despair, "I've seen it coming. But—I still don't understand it. I don't understand how you can go over."

"My ideas have changed and developed," I said.

I walked across to her bearskin hearthrug, and stood by the mantel.

"To think that you," she said; "you who might have been leader——" She could not finish it. "All the forces of reaction," she threw out.

"I don't think they are the forces of reaction," I said. "I think I can find work to do—better work on that side."

"Against us!" she said. "As if progress wasn't hard enough! As if it didn't call upon every able man!"

"I don't think Liberalism has a monopoly of progress."

She did not answer that. She sat quite still looking in front of her. "*Why* have you gone over?" she asked abruptly as though I had said nothing.

There came a silence that I was impelled to end. I began a stiff dissertation from the hearthrug. "I am going over, because I think I may join in an intellectual renascence on the Conservative side. I think that in the coming struggle there will be a partial and altogether confused and demoralising victory for democracy, that will stir the classes which now dominate the Conservative party into an energetic revival. They will set out to win back, and win back. Even if my estimate of contemporary forces is wrong and they win, they will still be forced to reconstruct their outlook. A war abroad will supply the chastening if home politics fail. The effort at renascence is bound to come by either alternative. I believe I can do more in relation to that effort than in any other connection in the world of politics at the present time. That's my case, Margaret."

She certainly did not grasp what I said. "And so you will throw aside all the beginnings, all the beliefs and pledges——" Again her sentence remained incomplete. "I doubt if even, once you have gone over, they will welcome you."

"That hardly matters."

I made an effort to resume my speech.

"I came into Parliament, Margaret," I said, "a little prematurely. Still—I suppose it was only by coming into Parliament that I could see

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things as I do now in terms of personality and imaginative range. . . ." I stopped. Her stiff, unhappy, unlistening silence broke up my disquisition.

"After all," I remarked, "most of this has been implicit in my writings."

She made no sign of admission.

"What are you going to do?" she asked.

"Keep my seat for a time and make the reasons of my breach clear. Then either I must resign or—probably the new Budget will lead to a General Election. It's evidently meant to strain the Lords and provoke a quarrel."

"You might, I think, have stayed to fight for the Budget."

"I'm not," I said, "so keen against the Lords."

On that we halted.

"But what are you going to do?" she asked.

"I shall make my quarrel over some points in the Budget. I can't quite tell you yet where my chance will come. Then I shall either resign my seat—or if things drift to a dissolution I shan't stand again."

"It's political suicide."

"Not altogether."

"I can't imagine you out of Parliament again. It's just like—like undoing all we have done. What will you do?"

"Write. Make a new, more definite place for myself. You know, of course, there's already a sort of group about Crupp and Gane."

Margaret seemed lost for a time in painful thought.

"For me," she said at last, "our political work has been a religion—it has been more than a religion."

I heard in silence. I had no form of protest available against the implications of that.

"And then I find you turning against all we aimed to do—talking of going over, almost lightly—to those others. . . ."

She was white-lipped as she spoke. In the most curious way she had captured the moral values of the situation. I found myself protesting ineffectually against her fixed conviction. "It's because I think my duty lies in this change that I make it," I said.

"I don't see how you can say that," she replied quietly.

There was another pause between us.

"Oh!" she said and clenched her hand upon the table. "That it should have come to this!"

She was extraordinarily dignified and extraordinarily absurd. She was hurt and thwarted beyond measure. She had no place in her ideas, I thought, for me. I could see how it appeared to her, but I could not make her see anything of the intricate process that had brought me to this divergence. The opposition of our intellectual temperaments was like a gag in my mouth. What was there for me to say? A flash of intuition told me that behind her white dignity was a passionate disappointment, a shattering of dreams that needed before everything else the relief of weeping.

"I've told you," I said awkwardly, "as soon as I could."

There was another long silence. "So that is how we stand," I said with an air of having things defined. I walked slowly to the door.

She had risen and stood now staring in front of her.

"Good night," I said, making no movement towards our habitual kiss.

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"Good night," she answered in a tragic note. . . .

I closed the door softly. I remained for a moment or so on the big landing, hesitating between my bedroom and my study. As I did so I heard the soft rustle of her movement and the click of the key in her bedroom door. Then everything was still. . . .

She hid her tears from me. Something gripped my heart at the thought.

"Damnation!" I said wincing. "Why the devil can't people at least *think* in the same manner?"

§ 2. And that insufficient colloquy was the beginning of a prolonged estrangement between us. It was characteristic of our relations that we never reopened the discussion. The thing had been in the air for some time; we had recognised it now; the widening breach between us was confessed. My own feelings were curiously divided. It is remarkable that my very real affection for Margaret only became evident to me with this quarrel. The changes of the heart are very subtle changes. I am quite unaware how or when my early romantic love for her purity and beauty and high-principled devotion evaporated from my life; but I do know that quite early in my parliamentary days there had come a vague, unconfessed resentment at the tie that seemed to hold me in servitude to her standards of private living and public act. I felt I was caught, and none the less so because it had been my own act to rivet on my shackles. So long as I still held myself bound to her that resentment grew. Now, since I had broken my bonds and taken my line it withered again, and I could think of Margaret with a returning kindliness.

But I still felt embarrassments with her. I felt myself dependent upon her for house-room and food and social support, as it were under false pretences. I would have liked to have separated our financial affairs altogether. But I knew that to raise the issue would have seemed a last brutal indelicacy. So I tried almost furtively to keep my personal expenditure within the scope of the private income I made by writing, and we went out together in her motor brougham, dined and made appearances, met politely at breakfast—parted at night with a kiss upon her cheek. The locking of her door upon me, which at that time I quite understood, which I understand now, became for a time in my mind, through some obscure process of the soul, an offence. I never crossed the landing to her room again.

In all this matter, and, indeed, in all my relations with Margaret, I perceive now I behaved badly and foolishly. My manifest blunder is that I, who was several years older than she, much subtler and in many ways wiser, never in any measure sought to guide and control her. After our marriage I treated her always as an equal, and let her go her way; held her responsible for all the weak and ineffective and unfortunate things she said and did to me. She wasn't clever enough to justify that. It wasn't fair to expect her to sympathise, anticipate, and understand. I ought to have taken care of her, roped her to me when it came to crossing the difficult places. If I had loved her more, and wiselier and more tenderly, if there had not been the consciousness of my financial dependence on her always stiffening my pride, I think she would have moved with me from the outset, and left the Liberals with me. But she did not get any inkling of the ends I sought in my change of sides. It must have seemed to her

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inexplicable perversity. She had, I knew—for surely I knew it then!—an immense capacity for loyalty and devotion. There she was with these treasures untouched, neglected and perplexed. A woman who loves wants to give. It is the duty and business of the man she has married for love to help her to help and give. But I was stupid. My eyes had never been opened. I was stiff with her and difficult to her, because even on my wedding morning there had been, deep down in my soul, voiceless though present, something weakly protesting, a faint perception of wrong-doing, the infinitesimally small, slow-multiplying germs of shame.

§ 3. I made my breach with the party on the Budget.

In many ways I was disposed to regard the 1909 Budget as a fine piece of statecraft. Its production was certainly a very unexpected display of vigour on the Liberal side. But on the whole this movement towards collectivist organisation on the part of the Liberals rather strengthened than weakened my resolve to cross the floor of the House. It had no intelligible psychological basis. It made it more necessary, I thought, to leaven the purely obstructive and reactionary elements that were at once manifest in the Opposition, and which the nature of the Liberal proposals seemed bound to develop. I assailed the land-taxation proposals in one main speech, and a series of minor speeches in committee. The line of attack I chose was that the land was a great public service that needed to be controlled on broad and far-sighted lines. I had no objection to its nationalisation, but I did object most strenuously to the idea of leaving it in private hands, and attempting to produce beneficial social results through the pressure of taxation upon the land-owning class. That might break it up in an utterly disastrous way. The drift of the Government proposals was all in the direction of sweating the landowner to get immediate values from his property, and such a course of action was bound to give us an irritated and vindictive landowning class, the class upon which we had hitherto relied—not unjustifiably—for certain broad, patriotic services and an influence upon our collective judgments that no other class seemed prepared to exercise. Abolish landlordism if you will, I said, buy it out, but do not drive it to a defensive fight, and leave it still sufficiently strong and wealthy to become a malcontent element in your State. You have taxed and controlled and pestered the brewer and the publican until the outraged Liquor Interest has become a national danger. You now propose to do the same thing on a larger scale. You turn a class which has many fine and truly aristocratic traditions towards revolt, and there is nothing in these or any other of your proposals that shows any sense of the need for leadership to replace these traditional leaders you are ousting. This was the substance of my case, and I hammered at it not only in the House, but in the press. . . .

The Kinghamstead division remained for some time insensitive to my defection.

Then it woke up suddenly, and began, in the columns of the *Kinghamstead Guardian*, an indignant, confused outcry. I was treated to an open letter, signed "Junius Secundus," and I replied in provocative terms. There were two thinly attended public meetings at different ends of the constituency, and then I had a correspondence with my old friend Parvill, the photographer, which ended in my seeing a deputation.

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My impression is that it consisted of about eighteen or twenty people. They had had to come upstairs to me, and they were manifestly full of indignation and a little short of breath. There was Parvill himself, J.P., dressed wholly in black—I think to mark his sense of the occasion—and curiously suggestive in his respect for my character and his concern for the honourableness of the *Kinghamstead Guardian* editor, of Mark Antony at the funeral of Cæsar. There was Mrs. Bulger, also in mourning; she had never abandoned the widow's streamers since the death of her husband ten years ago, and her loyalty to Liberalism of the severest type was part as it were of her weeds. There was a nephew of Sir Roderick Newton, a bright young Hebrew of the graver type, and a couple of dissenting ministers in high collars and hats that stopped half-way between the bowler of this world and the shovel-hat of heaven. There was also a young solicitor from Lurky done in the horsey style, and there was a very little nervous man with a high brow and a face contracting below as though the jaw-bones and teeth had been taken out and the features compressed. The rest of the deputation, which included two other public-spirited ladies and several ministers of religion, might have been raked out of any omnibus going Strandward during the May meetings. They thrust Parvill forward as spokesman, and manifested a strong disposition to say "Hear, hear!" to his more strenuous protests provided my eye wasn't upon them at the time.

I regarded this appalling deputation as Parvill's apologetic but quite definite utterances drew to an end. I had a moment of vision. Behind them I saw the wonderful array of skeleton forces that stand for public opinion, that are as much public opinion as exists indeed at the present time. The whole process of politics which bulks so solidly in history seemed for that clairvoyant instant but a froth of petty motives above abysms of indifference. . . .

Some one had finished. I perceived I had to speak.

"Very well," I said, "I won't keep you long in replying. I'll resign if there isn't a dissolution before next February, and if there is I shan't stand again. You don't want the bother and expense of a by-election [approving murmurs] if it can be avoided. But I may tell you plainly now that I don't think it will be necessary for me to resign, and the sooner you find my successor the better for the party. The Lords are in a corner; they've got to fight now or never, and I think they will throw out the Budget. Then they will go on fighting. It is a fight that will last for years. They have a sort of social discipline, and you haven't. You Liberals will find yourselves with a country behind you, vaguely indignant perhaps, but totally unprepared with any ideas whatever in the matter, face to face with the problem of bringing the British constitution up to date. Anything may happen, provided only that it is sufficiently absurd. If the King backs the Lords—and I don't see why he shouldn't—you have no Republican movement whatever to fall back upon. You lost it during the Era of Good Taste. The country, I say, is destitute of ideas, and you have no ideas to give it. I don't see what you will do. . . . For my own part, I mean to spend a year or so between a window and my writing-desk."

I paused. "I think, gentlemen," began Parvill, "that we hear all this with very great regret. . . ."

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§ 4. My estrangement from Margaret stands in my memory now as something that played itself out within the four walls of our house in Radnor Square, which was, indeed, confined to those limits. I went to and fro between my house and the House of Commons, and the dining-rooms and clubs and offices in which we were preparing our new developments, in a state of aggressive and energetic dissociation, in the nascent state, as a chemist would say. I was free now, and greedy for fresh combination. I had a tremendous sense of released energies. I had got back to the sort of thing I could do, and to the work that had been shaping itself for so long in my imagination. Our purpose now was plain, bold, and extraordinarily congenial. We meant no less than to organise a new movement in English thought and life, to resuscitate a Public Opinion and prepare the ground for a revised and renovated ruling culture.

For a time I seemed quite wonderfully able to do whatever I wanted to do. Shoesmith responded to my first advances. We decided to create a weekly paper as our nucleus, and Crupp and I set to work forthwith to collect a group of writers and speakers, including Esmeer, Britten, Lord Gane, Neal, and one or two younger men, which should constitute a more or less definite editorial council about me, and meet at a weekly lunch on Tuesday to sustain our general co-operation. We marked our claim upon Toryism even in the colour of our wrapper, and spoke of ourselves collectively as the Blue Weeklies. But our lunches were open to all sorts of guests, and our deliberations were never of a character to control me effectively in my editorial decisions. My only influential councillor at first was old Britten, who became my sub-editor. It was curious how we two had picked up our ancient intimacy again and resumed the easy give and take of our speculative dreaming schoolboy days.

For a time my life centred altogether upon this journalistic work. Britten was an experienced journalist, and I had most of the necessary instincts for the business. We meant to make the paper right and good down to the smallest detail, and we set ourselves at this with extraordinary zeal. It wasn't our intention to show our political motives too markedly at first, and through all the dust-storm and tumult and stress of the political struggle of 1910, we made a little intellectual oasis of good art criticism and good writing. It was the firm belief of nearly all of us that the Lords were destined to be beaten badly in 1910, and our game was the longer game of reconstruction that would begin when the shouting and tumult of that immediate conflict were over. Meanwhile we had to get into touch with just as many good minds as possible.

As we felt our feet, I developed slowly and carefully a broadly conceived and consistent political attitude. As I will explain later, we were feminist from the outset, though that caused Shoesmith and Gane great searchings of heart; we developed Esmeer's House of Lords reform scheme into a general cult of the aristocratic virtues, and we did much to humanise and liberalise the narrow excellences of the Break-up of the Poor Law agitation which had been organised originally by Beatrice and Sidney Webb. In addition, without any very definite explanation to any one but Esmeer and Isabel Rivers, and as if it was quite a small matter, I set myself to secure a uniform philosophical quality in our columns.

That, indeed, was the peculiar virtue and characteristic of the *Blue Weekly*. I was now very definitely convinced that much of the confusion

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and rottenness of contemporary thought was due to the general need of metaphysical training. . . . The great mass of people—and not simply common people, but people active and influential in intellectual things—are still quite untrained in the methods of thought; it is scarcely a caricature to call their thinking a crazy patchwork, discontinuous and chaotic. They arrive at conclusions by a kind of accident, and do not suspect any other way may be found to their attainment. A stage above the general condition is that minority of people who have at some time or other discovered general terms and a certain use for generalisations. They are—to fall back on the ancient phrasing—Realists of a crude sort. Such are the Baileys; such, to take their great prototype, was Herbert Spencer (who couldn't read Kant); such are regiments of prominent and entirely self-satisfied contemporaries. They go through queer little processes of definition and generalisation and deduction with the completest belief in the validity of the intellectual instrument they are using. They are Realists—Cocksurists—in matter of fact; sentimentalists in behaviour. The Baileys having got to this glorious stage in mental development—it is glorious because it has no doubts—were always talking about training "experts" to apply the same simple process to all the affairs of mankind. Well, Realism isn't the last word of human wisdom. Modest-minded people, doubtful people, subtle people, and the like—the kind of people William James writes of as "tough-minded," go on beyond this methodical happiness, and are for ever after critical of premises and terms. They are truer—and less confident. They have reached scepticism and the artistic method. They have emerged into the new Nominalism.

Both Isabel and I believe firmly that these differences of intellectual method matter profoundly in the affairs of mankind, that the collective mind of this intricate complex modern state can only function properly upon neo-Nominalist lines. This has always been her side of our mental co-operation rather than mine. Her mind has the light movement that goes so often with natural mental power; she has a wonderful art in illustration, and, as the reader probably knows already, she writes of metaphysical matters with a rare charm and vividness. So far there has been no collection of her papers published, but they are to be found not only in the *Blue Weekly* columns, but scattered about the monthlies; many people must be familiar with her style. It was an intention we did much to realise that we would use the *Blue Weekly* to maintain a stream of suggestion against crude thinking, and at last scarcely a week passed but some popular distinction, some large imposing generalisation, was touched to flaccidity by her pen or mine. . . .

I was at great pains to give my philosophical, political, and social matter the best literary and critical backing we could get in London. I hunted sedulously for good descriptive writing and good criticism; I was indefatigable in my readiness to hear and consider, if not to accept advice; I watched every corner of the paper, and had a dozen men alert to get me special matter of the sort that draws in the unattached reader. The chief danger on the literary side of a weekly is that it should fall into the hands of some particular school, and this I watched for closely. It seems almost impossible to get vividness of apprehension and breadth of view together in the same critic. So it falls to the wise editor to secure the first and impose the second. Directly I detected the shrill partisan note in our criticism,

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the attempt to puff a poor thing because it was "in the right direction," or damn a vigorous piece of work because it wasn't, I tackled the man and had it out with him. Our pay was good enough for that to matter a good deal. . . .

Our distinctive little blue and white poster kept up its neat persistent appeal to the public eye, and before 1911 was out, the *Blue Weekly* was printing twenty pages of publishers' advertisements, and went into all the clubs in London and three-quarters of the country houses where week-end parties gather together. Its sale by newsagents and bookstalls grew steadily. One got more and more the reassuring sense of being discussed, and influencing discussion.

§ 5. Our office was at the very top of a big building near the end of Adelphi Terrace; the main window beside my desk, a big undivided window of plate glass, looked out upon Cleopatra's Needle, the corner of the Hotel Cecil, the fine arches of Waterloo Bridge, and the long sweep of south bank with its shot-towers and chimneys, past Bankside to the dimly seen piers of the great bridge below the Tower. The dome of St. Paul's just floated into view on the left against the hotel façade. By night and day, in every light and atmosphere, it was a beautiful and various view, alive as a throbbing heart; a perpetual flow of traffic ploughed and splashed the streaming silver of the river, and by night the shapes of things became velvet-black and grey, and the water a shining mirror of steel, wearing coruscating gems of light. In the foreground the Embankment trams sailed glowing by, across the water advertisements flashed and flickered, trains went and came and a rolling drift of smoke reflected unseen fires. By day that spectacle was sometimes a marvel of shining wet and wind-cleared atmosphere, sometimes a mystery of drifting fog, sometimes a miracle of crowded details, minutely fine.

As I think of that view, so variously spacious in effect, I am back there and this sunlit paper might be lamp-lit and lying on my old desk. I see it all again, feel it all again. In the foreground is a reading-lamp and crumpled galley-slips and paged proofs and letters, two or three papers in manuscript and so forth. In the shadows are chairs and another table bearing papers and books, a rotating bookcase dimly seen, a long window-seat black in the darkness, and then the cool unbroken spectacle of the window. How often I would watch some tramcar, some string of barges go from me slowly out of sight. The people were black animalculæ by day; clustering, collecting, dispersing by night, they were phantom specks coming, vanishing, stirring obscurely between light and shade.

I recall many hours at my desk in that room before the crisis came, hours full of the peculiar happiness of effective strenuous work. Once some piece of writing went on, holding me intent and forgetful of time until I looked up from the warm circle of my light to see the eastward sky above the pale silhouette of the Tower Bridge, flushed and banded brightly with the dawn.

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CHAPTER THE FOURTH

THE BESETTING OF SEX

§ 1. Art is selection and so is most autobiography. But I am concerned with a more tangled business than selection, I want to show a contemporary man in relation to the State and social usage, and the social organism in relation to that man. To tell my story at all I have to simplify. I have given now the broad lines of my political development, and how I passed from my initial Liberal-Socialism to the conception of a constructive aristocracy. I have tried to set that out in the form of a man discovering himself. Incidentally that self-development led to a profound breach with my wife. One has read stories before of husband and wife speaking severally two different languages and coming to an understanding. But Margaret and I began in her dialect, and, as I came more and more to use my own, diverged.

I had thought when I married that the matter of womankind had ended for me. I have tried to tell all that sex and women had been to me up to my married life with Margaret and our fatal entanglement, tried to show the queer, crippled, embarrassed and limited way in which these interests break upon the life of a young man under contemporary conditions. I do not think my lot was a very exceptional one. I missed the chance of sisters and girl playmates, but that is not an uncommon misadventure in an age of small families; I never came to know any woman at all intimately until I was married to Margaret. My earlier love affairs were encounters of sex, under conditions of furtiveness and adventure that made them things in themselves, restricted and unilluminating. From a boyish disposition to be mystical and worshipping towards women I had passed into a disregardful attitude, as though women were things inferior or irrelevant, disturbers in great affairs. For a time Margaret had blotted out all other women; she was so different and so near; she was like a person who stands suddenly in front of a little window through which one has been surveying a crowd. She didn't become womankind for me so much as eliminate womankind from my world. . . . And then came this secret separation. . . .

Until this estrangement and the rapid and uncontrollable development of my relations with Isabel that followed it, I seemed to have solved the problem of women by marriage and disregard. I thought these things were over. I went about my career with Margaret beside me, her brow slightly knit, her manner faintly strenuous, helping, helping; and if we had not altogether abolished sex we had at least so circumscribed and isolated it that it would not have affected the general tenor of our lives in the slightest degree if we had.

And then this old, this fundamental obsession of my life returned. I have already compared the lot of the modern publicist to Machiavelli writing in his study; in his day women and sex were as disregarded in these high matters as, let us say, the chemistry of air or the will of the beasts in the fields; in ours the case has altogether changed, and woman has come now to stand beside the tall candles, half in the light, half in the mystery of the shadows, besetting, interrupting, demanding unrelentingly an altogether unprecedented attention. I feel that in these matters my life has been

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almost typical of my time. Woman insists upon her presence. She is no longer a mere physical need, an æsthetic by-play, a sentimental background; she is a moral and intellectual necessity in a man's life. She comes to the politician and demands, Is she a child or a citizen? Is she a thing or a soul? She comes to the individual man as she came to me, and asks, Is she a cherished weakling or an equal mate, an unavoidable helper? Is she to be tried and trusted or guarded and controlled, bond or free? For if she is a mate, one must at once trust more and exact more, exacting toil, courage, and the hardest, most necessary thing of all, the clearest, most shameless explicitness of understanding. . . .

§ 2. In all my earlier imaginings of statecraft I had tacitly assumed either that the relations of the sexes were all right or that anyhow they didn't concern the State. It was a matter they, whoever "they" were, had to settle among themselves. That sort of disregard was possible then. But even before 1906 there were endless intimations that the dams holding back great reservoirs of discussion were crumbling. We political schemers were ploughing wider than any one had ploughed before in the field of social reconstruction. We had also, we realised, to plough deeper. We had to plough down at last to the passionate elements of sexual relationship and examine and decide upon them.

The signs multiplied. In a year or so half the police of the metropolis were scarce sufficient to protect the House from one clamorous aspect of the new problem. The members went about Westminster with an odd, new sense of being beset. A good proportion of us kept up the pretence that the Vote for Women was an isolated fad, and the agitation an epidemic madness that would presently pass. But it was manifest to any one who sought more than comfort in the matter that the streams of women and sympathisers and money forthcoming marked far deeper and wider things than an idle fancy for the franchise. The existing laws and conventions of relationship between Man and Woman were just as unsatisfactory a disorder as anything else in our tumbled confusion of a world, and that also was coming to bear upon statecraft.

My first Parliament was the Parliament of the Suffragettes. I don't propose to tell here of that amazing campaign, with its absurdities and follies, its courage and devotion. There were aspects of that unquenchable agitation that were absolutely heroic and aspects that were absolutely pitiful. It was unreasonable, unwise, and, except for its one central insistence, astonishingly incoherent. But the very incoherence of the demand witnessed, I think, to the forces that lay behind it. It wasn't a simple argument based on a simple assumption; it was the first crude expression of a great mass and mingling of convergent feelings, of a widespread, confused persuasion among modern educated women that the conditions of their relations with men were oppressive, ugly, dishonouring, and had to be altered. They had not merely adopted the Vote as a symbol of equality; it was fairly manifest to me that, given it, they meant to use it, and to use it perhaps even vindictively and blindly as a weapon against many things they had every reason to hate. . . .

I remember with exceptional vividness the great night early in the Session of 1909, when—I think it was—fifty or sixty women went to prison. I had been dining at the Barhams', and Lord Barham and I came down

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from the direction of St. James's Park into a crowd and a confusion outside the Caxton Hall. We found ourselves drifting with an immense multitude towards Parliament Square and parallel with a silent, close-packed column of girls and women, for the most part white-faced and intent. I still remember the effect of their faces upon me. It was quite different from the general effect of staring about and divided attention one gets in a political procession of men. There was an expression of heroic tension.

There had been a pretty deliberate appeal on the part of the women's organisers to the Unemployed, who had been demonstrating throughout that winter, to join forces with the movement, and the result was shown in the quality of the crowd upon the pavement. It was an ugly, dangerous-looking crowd, but as yet good-tempered and sympathetic. When at last we got within sight of the House the square was a seething sea of excited people, and the array of police on horse and on foot might have been assembled for a revolutionary outbreak. There were dense masses of people up Whitehall, and right on to Westminster Bridge. The scuffle that ended in the arrests was the poorest explosion to follow such stupendous preparations. . . .

§ 3. Later on in that year the women began a new attack. Day and night, and all through the long nights of the Budget sittings, at all the piers of the gates of New Palace Yard and at St. Stephen's Porch, stood women pickets, and watched us silently and reproachfully as we went to and fro. They were women of all sorts, though, of course, the independent worker-class predominated. There were grey-headed old ladies standing there, sturdily charming in the rain ; battered-looking, ambiguous women, with something of the desperate bitterness of battered women showing in their eyes ; north country factory girls ; cheaply dressed suburban women ; trim, comfortable mothers of families ; valiant-eyed girl graduates ; lank, hungry-looking creatures, who stirred one's imagination ; one very dainty little woman in deep mourning, I recall, grave and steadfast, with eyes fixed on distant things. Some of those women looked defiant, some timidly aggressive, some full of the stir of adventure, some drooping with cold and fatigue. The supply never ceased. I had a mortal fear that somehow the supply might halt or cease. I found that continual siege of the legislature extraordinarily impressive—infinitely more impressive than the feeble-forcible "ragging" of the more militant section. I thought of the appeal that must be going through the country, summoning the women from countless scattered homes, rooms, colleges, to Westminster.

I remember too the petty little difficulty I felt, whether I should ignore these pickets altogether, or lift a hat as I hurried past with averted eyes, or look them in the face as I did so. Towards the end the House evolved an etiquette of salutation.

§ 4. There was a tendency, even on the part of its sympathisers, to treat the whole suffrage agitation as if it were a disconnected issue, irrelevant to all other broad developments of social and political life. We struggled, all of us, to ignore the indicating finger it thrust out before us. "Your schemes, for all their bigness," it insisted to our reluctant, averted minds, "still don't go down to the essential things. . . ."

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We have to plough deeper, or our inadequate children's insufficient children will starve amidst harvests of earless futility. That conservatism which works in every class to preserve in its essentials the habitual daily life is all against that profounder treatment of political issues. The politician, almost as absurdly as the philosopher, tends constantly, in spite of magnificent preludes, vast intimations, to specialise himself out of the reality he has so stupendously summoned—he bolts back to littleness. The world has to be moulded anew, he continues to admit, but without, he adds, any risk of upsetting his week-end visits, his morning cup of tea. . . .

The discussion of the relations of men and women disturbs every one. And at any particular time only a small minority have a personal interest in changing the established state of affairs. Habit and interest are in a constantly recruited majority against conscious change and adjustment in these matters. Drift rules us. The great mass of people, and an overwhelming proportion of influential people, are people who have banished their dreams and made their compromise. Wonderful and beautiful possibilities are no longer to be thought about. They have given up any aspirations for intense love, for splendid offspring, for keen delights, have accepted a cultivated kindliness and an uncritical sense of righteousness as their compensation. It's a settled affair with them, a settled, dangerous affair. Most of them fear, and many hate, the slightest reminder of those abandoned dreams. As Dayton once said to the Pentagram Circle, when we were discussing the problem of a universal marriage law throughout the Empire, " I am for leaving all these things alone." And then, with a groan in his voice, " Leave them alone ! Leave them all alone ! "

That was his whole speech for the evening, in a note of suppressed passion, and presently, against all our etiquette, he got up and went out.

For some years after my marriage, I too was for leaving them alone. I developed a dread and dislike for romance, for emotional music, for the human figure in art—turning my heart to landscape. I wanted to sneer at lovers and their ecstasies, and was uncomfortable until I found the effective sneer. In matters of private morals these were my most uncharitable years; I didn't want to think of these things any more for ever. I hated the people whose talk or practice showed they were not of my opinion. I wanted to believe that their views were immoral and objectionable and contemptible, because I had decided to treat them as at that level. I was, in fact, falling into the attitude of the normal decent man.

And yet one cannot help thinking ! The sensible moralised man finds it hard to escape the stream of suggestion that there are still dreams beyond these commonplace acquiescences—the appeal of beauty suddenly shining upon one, the moth-like stirrings of serene summer nights, the sweetness of distant music. . . .

It is one of the paradoxical factors in our public life at the present time, which penalises abandonment to love so abundantly and so heavily, that power and influence to control fall largely to unencumbered people and sterile people, people whose very deficiency in feeling has left them free to follow ambition, people beauty-blind, who don't understand what it is to fall in love, what it is to desire children or have them, what it is to feel in their blood and bodies the supreme claim of good births and selective births above all other affairs in life, people almost of necessity instinctively averse from this most fundamental aspect of existence. . . .

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§ 5. It wasn't, however, my deepening sympathy with and understanding of the position of women in general, or the change in my ideas about all these intimate things my fast friendship with Isabel was bringing about, that led me to the heretical views I have in the last five years dragged from the region of academic and timid discussion into the field of practical politics. Those influences, no doubt, have converged to the same end, and given me a powerful emotional push upon my road, but it was a broader and colder view of things that first determined me in my attempt to graft the Endowment of Motherhood in some form or other upon British Imperialism. Now that I am exiled from the political world, it is possible to estimate just how effectually that grafting has been done.

I have explained how the ideas of a trained aristocracy and a universal education grew to paramount importance in my political scheme. It is but a short step from this to the question of the quantity and quality of births in the community, and from that again to these forbidden and fear-beset topics of marriage and the family organisation. A sporadic discussion of these aspects had been going on for years, a Eugenic society existed, and articles on the Falling Birth-Rate, and the Rapid Multiplication of the Unfit were staples of the monthly magazines. But beyond an intermittent scolding of prosperous childless people in general—one never addressed them in particular—nothing was done towards arresting those adverse processes. Almost against my natural inclination, I found myself forced to go into these things. I came to the conclusion that under modern conditions the isolated private family, based on the existing marriage contract, was failing in its work. It wasn't producing enough children, and children good enough and well trained enough for the demands of the developing civilised State. Our civilisation was growing outwardly, and decaying in its intimate substance; and unless it was presently to collapse, some very extensive and courageous reorganisation was needed. The old haphazard system of pairing, qualified more and more by worldly discretions, no longer secures us a young population numerous enough or good enough for the growing needs and possibilities of our Empire. Statecraft sits weaving splendid garments, no doubt, but with a puny, ugly, insufficient baby in the cradle.

No one so far has dared to take up this problem as a present question for statecraft, but it comes unheralded, unadvocated, and sits at every legislative board. Every improvement is provisional except the improvement of the race, and it became more and more doubtful to me if we were improving the race at all! Splendid and beautiful and courageous people must come together and have children, women with their fine senses and glorious devotion must be freed from the net that compels them to be celibate, compels them to be childless and useless, or to bear children ignobly to men whom need and ignorance and the treacherous pressure of circumstances have forced upon them. We all know that, and so few dare even to whisper it. It is as if a party of pigmies in a not too capacious room had been joined by a carnivorous giant—and decided to go on living happily by cutting him dead. . . .

The problem the developing civilised State has to solve is how it can get the best possible increase under the best possible conditions. I became more and more convinced that the independent family unit of to-day, in which the man is master of the wife and owner of the children, in which all

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are dependent upon him, subordinated to his enterprises and liable to follow his fortunes up or down, does not supply anything like the best conceivable conditions. An enormous premium both in pleasure and competitive efficiency is put upon voluntary childlessness, and enormous inducements are held out to women to subordinate instinctive and selective preferences to social and material considerations.

The practical reaction of modern conditions upon the old tradition of the family is this: that beneath the pretence that nothing is changing, secretly and with all the unwholesomeness of secrecy everything is changed. Offspring fall away, the birth-rate falls, and falls most among just the most efficient and active and best adapted classes in the community. The species is recruited from among its failures and from among less civilised aliens. Contemporary civilisations are in effect burning the best of their possible babies in the furnaces that run the machinery. In the United States the native Anglo-American strain has scarcely increased at all since 1830, and in most Western European countries the same is probably true of the ablest and most energetic elements in the community. The women of these classes still remain legally and practically dependent and protected with the only natural excuse for their dependence gone. . . .

The modern world becomes an immense spectacle of unsatisfactory groupings; here childless couples bored to death in the hopeless effort to sustain an incessant honeymoon, here homes in which a solitary child grows unsocially, here small two- or three-child homes that do no more than continue the culture of the parents at a great social cost, here numbers of unhappy educated but childless married women, here careless, decivilised fecund homes, here orphanages and asylums for the heedlessly begotten. It is just the disorderly proliferation of Bromstead over again, in lives instead of in houses.

What is the good, what is the common sense, of rectifying boundaries, pushing research and discovery, building cities, improving all the facilities of life, making great fleets, waging wars, while this aimless decadence remains the quality of the biological outlook. . . .

It is difficult now to trace how I changed from my early aversion until I faced this mass of problems. But so far back as 1910 I had it clear in my mind that I would rather fail utterly than participate in all the surrenders of mind and body that are implied in Dayton's snarl of "Leave them alone; leave them all alone!" Marriage and the begetting and care of children is the very ground-substance in the life of the community. In a world in which everything changes, in which fresh methods, fresh adjustments and fresh ideas perpetually renew the circumstances of life, it is preposterous that we should not even examine into these matters, should rest content to be ruled by the uncriticised traditions of a barbaric age.

§ 6. Now it seems to me that the solution of this problem is also the solution of the woman's individual problem. The two go together, are right and left of one question. The only conceivable way out from our *impasse* lies in the recognition of parentage, that is to say, of adequate mothering, as no longer a chance product of individual passions but a service rendered to the State. Women must become less and less subordinated to individual men, since this works out in a more or less complete limitation, waste, and sterilisation of their essentially social function; they must

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become more and more subordinated as individually independent citizens to the collective purpose. Or, to express the thing by a familiar phrase, the highly organised, scientific State we desire must, if it is to exist at all, base itself not upon the irresponsible man-ruled family, but upon the citizenship and freedom of women and the public endowment of motherhood.

After two generations of confused and experimental revolt it grows clear to modern women that a conscious, deliberate motherhood and mothering is their special function in the State, and that a personal subordination to an individual man with an unlimited power of control over this intimate and supreme duty is a degradation. No contemporary woman of education put to the test is willing to recognise any claim a man can make upon her but the claim of her freely given devotion to him. This alters the spirit of the family relationships fundamentally. Their form remains just what it was when woman was esteemed a pretty, desirable child-producing chattel. The man took her and ruled her, firmly but kindly, and faced the outer world on her behalf. The good, kind father is still supposed to watch over his blank-minded and passive daughter until he judges it fit to hand her over to a good, kind husband who gently but firmly makes certain hitherto undreamt-of revelations, produces offspring with imposing dignity, cherishes her weakness, and guides her timid footsteps for ever after. Against these time-honoured ideas the new spirit of womanhood struggles in shame, astonishment, bitterness, and tears. . . .

I confess myself altogether feminist. I have no doubts in the matter. I want this coddling and brow-beating of women to cease. I want to see women come in free and fearless, to a full participation in the collective purpose of mankind. Women, I am convinced, are as fine as men; they can be as wise as men; they are capable of far greater devotion than men. I want to see them citizens, with a marriage law framed primarily for them and for their protection and the good of the race, and not for men's satisfactions and peace of mind. I want to see them bearing and rearing good children in the State as a generously rewarded public duty and service, choosing their husbands freely and discerningly, and in no way enslaved by or subordinated to the men they have chosen. The social consciousness of women seems to me an unworked, an almost untouched mine of wealth for the constructive purpose of the world. I want to change the respective values in the family group altogether, and make the home indeed the women's kingdom and the mother the owner and responsible guardian of her children.

It is no use pretending that this is not novel and revolutionary, it is. The Endowment of Motherhood implies a new method of social organisation, a rearrangement of the social unit, untried in human experience—as untried as electric traction was or flying in 1800. Of course it may work out to modify men's ideas of marriage profoundly. To me that is a secondary consideration. I do not believe that particular assertion myself, because I am convinced that a practical monogamy is a psychological necessity to the mass of civilised people. But even if I did believe it I should still keep to my present line, because it is the only line that will prevent a highly organised civilisation from ending in biological decay. The Public Endowment of Motherhood is the only possible way which will ensure the permanently developing civilised State at which all constructive minds are aiming. A point is reached in the life-history of a civilisation

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when either this reconstruction must be effected or the quality and *morale* of the population prove insufficient for the needs of the developing organisation. It is not so much moral decadence that will destroy us as moral inadaptability. The old code fails under the new needs. The only alternative to this profound reconstruction is a decay in human quality and social collapse. Either this unprecedented rearrangement must be achieved by our civilisation, or it must presently come upon a phrase of disorder and crumble and perish, as Rome perished, as France declines, as the strain of the Pilgrim Fathers dwindles out of America. Whatever hope there may be in the attempt therefore, there is no alternative to the attempt.

§ 7. I wanted political success now dearly enough, but not at the price of constructive realities. These questions were no doubt monstrously dangerous in the political world; there wasn't a politician alive who didn't look scared at the mention of "The Family," but if raising these issues were essential to the social reconstructions on which my life was set, that did not matter. It only implied that I should take them up with deliberate caution. There was no release because of risk or difficulty.

The question of whether I should commit myself to some open project in this direction was going on in my mind concurrently with my speculations about a change of party, like bass and treble in a complex piece of music. The two drew to a conclusion together. I would not only go over to Imperialism, but I would attempt to biologise Imperialism.

I thought at first that I was undertaking a monstrous uphill task. But as I came to look into the possibilities of the matter, a strong persuasion grew up in my mind that this panic fear of legislative proposals affecting the family basis was excessive, that things were much riper for development in this direction than old experienced people out of touch with the younger generation imagined, that to phrase the thing in a parliamentary fashion, "something might be done in the constituencies" with the Endowment of Motherhood forthwith.

I went to work very carefully. I got Roper of the *Daily Telephone* and Burkett of the *Dial* to try over a silly-season discussion of State Help for Mothers, and I put a series of articles on eugenics, upon the fall in the birth-rate, and similar topics in the *Blue Weekly*, leading up to a tentative and generalised advocacy of the public endowment of the nation's children. I was more and more struck by the acceptance won by a sober and restrained presentation of this suggestion.

And then, in the fourth year of the *Blue Weekly's* career, came the Handitch election, and I was forced by the clamour of my antagonist, and very willingly forced, to put my convictions to the test. I returned triumphantly to Westminster with the Public Endowment of Motherhood as part of my open profession and with the full approval of the party press. Applauding benches of Imperialists cheered me on my way to the table between the Whips.

That second time I took the oath I was not one of a crowd of new members, but salient, an event, a symbol of profound changes and new purposes in the national life.

(*To be continued*)

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Histoire du Prince Alasi et de la Princesse Firouzka

By William Beckford

II

Nous revînmes sur nos pas, et le joaillier ouvrit sa caisse, où je n'aurois rien trouvé digne de ma curiosité, si mes regards n'étoient pas tombés sur une boite d'or, autour de laquelle étoient gravés ces mots :—

"PORTRAIT DE LA PLUS BELLE ET DE LA PLUS MALHEUREUSE PRINCESSE DU MONDE."

"Oh, voyons ceci," s'écria Firouz ; "cette beauté, sans doute en pleurs, nous attendrira, et il est agréable de s'attendrir quelquefois ! "

J'ouvre la boîte et reste immobile d'étonnement. Qu'est-ce donc que vous voyez là ? " demande mon ami ;—il regarde—fait un geste d'indignation, et se tournant vers ses deux eunuques :—"Saisissez-vous de cet insolent joaillier," leur dit-il, "et allez le jeter, lui, sa caisse, et toutes ses pierreries dans le fleuve ;—quoi ! un tel misérable auroit impunément osé exposer aux yeux de l'univers la fille de Tilanshah, ce bouton de rose que je croyois à l'abri du souffle d'un vent malin sous l'humble toit de l'adversité ! "—"Ciel ! " m'écriai-je à mon tour; "que vois-je ! et qu'entens-je !—qu'on ne touche pas à cet homme !—et toi, ami de mon âme, parle—seroit-ce bien ta sœur que je vois ici sous tes traits ? "

"Oui, roi de Kharesme," me répondit le prince de Shirvan, "c'est ici le portrait de ma sœur jumelle, Firouzka: la reine ma mère la sauva avec moi de la fureur des rebelles. Quand on me sépara d'elle pour me remettre entre les mains du mage qui m'a conduit chez vous, on me dit qu'elle seroit mise en lieu de sûreté, mais je vois bien qu'on m'a trompé."—"Seigneur," dit alors le joaillier, "c'est la reine votre mère qui s'est, avec sa fille, réfugiée dans une maison que j'ai aux environs de Moussoul, qui m'a ordonné de porter ce portrait dans toutes les cours de l'Asie, dans l'espoir que la beauté de Firouzka suscitera des vengeurs au roi son époux; —j'en ai déjà parcouru plusieurs avec le succès désiré, mais elle ne m'avoit pas dit que vous étiez dans celle-ci."—"Elle n'en savoit rien sans doute, et me croyoit chez le mage," dit Firouz; "mais," continua-t-il en se tournant vers moi, "vous pâlissez, cher ami, regagnons votre appartement, et remettons la partie de chasse à une autre fois."

Je me laissai conduire, et m'étant d'abord jetté sur une estrade ne cessai de contempler le portrait. "O mon aimable Firouz," m'écriai-je; "ces yeux, cette bouche, tous ces traits sont les tiens, ce ne sont pas tout à fait tes cheveux, et je voudrois que ce les fussent ; mais ceux-ci ont pris la couleur du camphre, comme les tiens celle du musc."

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"Eh quoi," me dit Firouz en riant, "vous enflammez pour une fade peinture, vous qui avez résisté aux charmes flamboyants de Rondabah. Mais calmez-vous, cher Alasi," continua-t-il en prenant un air sérieux, "l'épouse de Tilanshah vous appellera son fils ; je vais lui renvoyer son joaillier, et lui écrire qu'elle n'accepte les secours d'aucun prince de la terre, et que c'est mon bienfaiteur, mon ami, qui sera le vengeur qu'elle cherche. Mais hâtons-nous de punir la princesse de Ghilan de l'affront qu'elle vous a fait ; prévenons ses fureurs,—comment pourriez-vous reconquerir mon royaume quand le vôtre seroit en danger ?" Du moment que je ne crus plus ressentir qu'une passion intelligible, la paix revint dans mon cœur ; il se ranima ;—je donnai des ordres positifs pour accélérer notre entreprise, et bientôt nous nous mîmes en marche avec une nombreuse armée.

Les frontières du Ghilan étoient dégarnies ;—nous les ravageâmes sans pitié, mais les forces de Firouz ne répondoient pas à son courage,—je les menageois au risque de donner à l'ennemi le tems de s'armer. Un jour que j'avois fait faire halte dans une vallée couverte d'une mousse fraîche, et arosée d'un ruisseau limpide, nous vîmes passer peu loin de nous une biche plus blanche que la neige. Aussitôt Firouz se saisit de son arc, et décoche une flèche à cette innocente bête ;—il l'atteint, elle tombe, nous courons à elle. Un paysan, qui nous voyoit, nous crie: "Ah! qu'avez-vous fait ! Vous avez tué la biche de la sainte femme !" Cette exclamation réjouit Firouz, mais il n'eut pas longtems de quoi rire ; un chien énorme, compagnon de la biche, saute sur lui, le terrasse, lui tient la gorge serrée avec ses fortes pattes, et sembloit attendre les ordres de quelqu'un pour l'étrangler. Je n'osois ni crier ni attaquer le chien de peur de l'animer ; je ne pouvois essayer de lui couper la tête d'un seul coup, il étoit trop bien collé sur sa proie pour le hazarder ; enfin j'étois pret à expirer de terreur, quand je vis accourir une femme voilée qui obligea le chien à quitter prise ; et qui ensuite, se tournant vers moi, me dit: "Je ne croyois pas, roi de Kharesme, vous retrouver dans un lieu où j'étois venue m'ensevelir toute vivante. Je viens de rendre, selon le précepte divin, le bien pour le mal, en sauvant la vie à Firouz ;—ne rendez pas le mal pour le bien en détruisant ces peuples, qui, loin de chercher à me venger, ignorent même l'injure qui m'a été faite." En achevant ces mots, elle lève son voile, nous découvre le visage majestueux de Rondabah, et s'éloignant de nous d'un pas précipité, nous laisse dans un étonnement inexprimable.

Firouz se remit le premier. "Eh bien !" me dit-il, douterez-vous à présent de l'habileté en magie de Rondabah ? Que ferons-nous pour nous garantir de ses embûches ? Je n'y vois qu'un seul moyen,—surprenons-la cette nuit,—allons, avec un détachement de nos soldats les plus devoués, la brûler toute vive dans sa retraite, que nous nous ferons adroitement enseigner ; ou résolvons-nous à être mis en pièces par les Afrites qui la servent sous la forme d'animaux."—"Quelle horreur !" m'écriai-je; "quoi ! nous reconnoîtrions ainsi le service qu'elle vient de nous rendre !—quelle qu'elle soit, elle vient de vous délivrer d'une mort cruelle."

"Ah ! prince crédule," répondit Firouz, "ne voyez-vous pas que l'infâme sorcière n'a fait que différer sa vengeance,—qu'elle a craint qu'en la hâtant elle s'exposeroit à en perdre le fruit ? . . . mais que dis-je ? Ce n'est qu'à moi qu'elle en veut, et j'y consens ;—j'ose espérer qu'après ma mort elle vous épargnera, et se contentera de vous rendre son esclave."

Ce discours eut tout l'effet que Firouz en attendoit ;—je n'étois plus à

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moi-même dès qu'il me faisoit entrevoir le moindre danger pour lui. Je fus aussi ardent qu'il pouvoit le désirer dans l'exécution de son noir et affreux complot. Les flammes qui consumèrent l'habitation rustique de Rondabah furent allumées par mes mains ainsi que par les siennes, et malgré les paysans d'alentour, à qui nous donnions la mort pour prix de leur compassion, nous ne quittâmes ce lieu que quand nous crûmes Rondabah ensevelie sous un monceau de cendres. Quelques jours après, je voulus faire avancer mon armée dans l'intérieur du pays, mais me trouvai bientôt arrêté par les troupes ennemies, à la tête desquelles étoient le roi de Ghilan et son fils. Il fallut donner bataille. Firouz voulut malgré moi combattre à mes côtés : je n'en fus pas plus vaillant pour cela,—je songeois moins à attaquer qu'à parer les coups qu'on lui portoit ; il se jettoit au devant de ceux qui m'étoient adressés ;—nous ne nous perdions pas de vue l'un l'autre, —on ne pouvoit douter que chacun de nous ne défendit sa propre vie dans celle de son ami.

Le prince de Ghilan m'avoit cherché partout, il me joignit enfin, et fondant sur moi le sabre levé :—"Roi de Kharesme," me dit-il, "tu vas payer de ta vie l'injure atroce que tu as faite à ma sœur ; si je l'avois sçue plutôt, j'aurois été te chercher jusqu'en ton palais, malgré les noirs esprits qui l'habitent." Il avoit à peine achevé ces mots, que la main qui tenoit le fer vengeur dont il me menaçoit, tomba par terre d'un revers du sabre de Firouz. Le roi de Ghilan accourt—il écume de rage—il nous porte deux furieux coups : j'évite celui qui m'étoit adressé, mon ami est atteint à l'épaule par l'autre ; je le vois chanceler. Faire voler en l'air la tête du vieux roi, prendre Firouz sur mon cheval, et m'éloigner à toute bride, tout cela fut l'affaire d'un instant.

Le fils de Tilanshah avoit perdu connoissance ;—je n'étois guère en meilleur état. Au lieu de reprendre le chemin de mon camp, je m'enfonçai dans une forêt épaisse et sombre, où je ne faissois que tournoyer comme un insensé. Heureusement un bucheron nous aperçut, il s'approcha de nous et en arrêtant mon cheval, me dit : "Si vous n'avez pas tout à fait perdu la raison, si vous ne voulez pas que ce jeune homme expire dans vos bras, suivez-moi jusqu'à la cabane de mon père, vous y serez secourus."

Je me laisse conduire ; le vieillard nous reçoit avec bienveillance ; il fait mettre Firouz sur un lit, court chercher un élixir qu'il lui fait avaler ; puis me dit : "Un moment plus tard ce jeune homme étoit mort ; il a presque perdu tout son sang, il falloit d'abord réparer cette perte. A présent nous examinerons sa blessure ; et, tandis que mon fils va dans la forêt chercher une herbe fraîche dont j'ai besoin, vous m'aiderez à déshabiller votre ami."

J'agissois machinalement et d'une main tremblante ;—mais je revins bien vite à moi-même lorsqu'en ouvrant la veste de Firouz je vis un sein que les houris auroit envié. "Ah ! c'est une femme !" dit le vieillard. "Qu'Allah en soit loué," m'écriai-je dans un délire de surprise et de joye ; "mais que dites-vous de sa blessure ?"—"Qu'elle n'est pas mortelle," me dit le bonhomme en l'examinant, "et que quand j'aurai bandé sa plaie elle reviendra à la vie. Calmez-vous donc, jeune homme," continua-t-il, "et surtout ménagez le repos de celle que je vois bien que vous aimez passionnement—une émotion violente la feroit expirer à vos yeux."

Le transport d'amour et de joie qui s'étoit emparé de mon âme céda la place à la crainte que me causèrent les paroles alarmantes du vieillard ;

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je l'aidai en silence à faire son office ; puis ayant enveloppé dans des couvertures de peau de léopard la défaillante Firouzka—car c'étoit cette princesse elle-même—j'attendis dans des angoisses mortelles qu'elle rouvrît ses yeux à la lumière.

L'espoir que le vieillard m'avoit donné ne tarda pas à être confirmé ; ma bien-aimée fit un soupir, tourna ses yeux languissans sur moi, et me dit : " Ou sommes nous, mon ami ?—la bataille seroit-elle perdue, et . . . ? " —" Non, non," interrompis-je en lui mettant la main sur la bouche, " tout est gagné puisque votre précieuse vie est sauvée, mais tenez-vous tranquille, vous ne sauriez croire tout le mal qu'il pourroit en arriver si vous parliez trop." Firouzka comprit tout le sens de ces mots ; elle se tût, et bientôt la foiblesse où elle étoit la jetta dans un profond sommeil. Le vieillard l'observoit d'un œil content, tandis que ma respiration répétoit les mouvemens de son sein élastique, sur lequel j'avois doucement posé la main. Elle dormit ainsi pendant deux heures, et ne se réveilla que lorsque le bucheron entra brusquement dans la cabane. Il n'apportoit point l'herbe que son pere lui avoit demandée, et je lui en témoignois ma surprise ; mais Friouzka, que le repos avoit ranimée, m'interrompant :— " Tu as du moins," lui dit-elle, " quelques nouvelles à nous conter."— " Oh ! oui, oui," repondit-il, " et de très bonnes. L'armée des Kharesmiens a été taillée en pièces, leur camp pillé, et la victoire seroit complète, si l'on pouvoit ratrapper ces deux méchans princes, Alasi et Firouz, qui se sont enfuis après avoit tué notre roi et son fils. Mais la princesse Rondabah, qui est montée sur le trône, les fait chercher partout, et promet de si grandes récompenses à qui les trouvera, qu'elle ne sauroit manquer de les avoir bientôt en son pouvoir."—" Ah ! que je suis charmée de ce que tu me dis," s'écria Firouzka, sans qu'il parut la moindre altération sur son visage ; " on nous avoit assurés que Rondabah avoit été brûlée dans sa maison champêtre ; et j'en étois fâchée, car je sais qu'elle est une excellente princesse."

" Elle est encore meilleure que vous ne le pensez," répliqua le paysan d'un air malin, " et c'est pour cela que le ciel l'a protégée. Le prince son frère l'avoit trouvée par hazard, et emmenée avec lui quelques heures avant l'attentat dont vous parlez, lequel, s'il plaît à Dieu, ne tardera pas à être puni." Tout en disant ceci d'un ton qui marquoit assez qu'il nous prenoit pour ce que nous étions, le rustre fit signe à son père de le suivre. Ils sortirent tous deux, et nous entendîmes au loin le pas de plusieurs chevaux. Alors, Firouzka se levant sur son séant, et me présentant un rasoir qu'elle tira de dessous sa robe, me dit, à demi voix: " Vous voyez, cher Alasi, le danger où nous sommes ;—hâtez-vous de couper mes renaissans cheveux et de les jeter dans ces flammes. Ne me repliquez pas un seul mot ; si vous perdez un instant, c'en est fait de nous."

Je n'avois qu'à obéir à un ordre si pressant, et je le fis. Un moment après un Dive, sous la forme d'un Ethiopien, parut à nos yeux, et demanda à Firouzka ce qu'elle vouloit de lui. " Je veux," répondit-elle, " que tu me portes à l'instant même, avec mon ami, dans la caverne du mage ton maître, et qu'en passant tu crases ces deux misérables qui sont à marchander notre vie."

Le Dive ne se le fit pas dire deux fois ; il nous prit tous deux dans ses bras, sortit de la cabane, qu'avec un coup de pied il fit tomber sur nos hôtes, et fendit les airs si rapidement que j'en perdis connoissance.

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Quand je revins à moi je me trouvai dans les bras de Firouzka, et ne vis que ce charmant visage affectueusement collé contre le mien. Je refermai doucement les paupières, comme on fait lorsqu'on veut continuer un agréable songe, mais je sentis bientôt que mon bonheur étoit réel. "O méchant Firouz! O cruelle Firouzka!" m'ecriai-je. "Quel tourmens vous m'avez causés!" Tout en disant ces mots, j'accablois de baisers ardents ces belles et douces lèvres qui avoient pressé les miennes dans mon état d'insensibilité, et qui alors cherchoient à ses dérober à mes transports, quand tout à coup me ressouvenant de la blessure de ma bien-aimée, je lui donnai le tems de respirer pour répondre aux alarmes que je lui témoignai."

"Calmez-vous, cher Alasi," me dit-elle, "je suis parfaitement guérie, et tout vous sera dans peu éclairci. Cependant, levez la tête, et regardez autour de vous." J'obéis, et crus être sous un nouveau firmament parsemé d'étoiles mille fois plus brillantes et plus rapprochées de nous quelle ne le sont dans leur cours naturel; je tournai la vue de tous côtés, et il me parut que j'étois dans une vaste plaine environnée de nuages transparents qui renfermoient avec nous les plus belles et les plus délicieuses productions de la terre. "Ah!" dis-je, après un moment de surprise, et en embrassant Firouzka, "que m'importe que nous ayons été transportés dans le Cheheristan! Le vrai séjour du bonheur est dans tes bras."

"Ce n'est point ici le Cheheristan," me répondit la fille de Tilanshah; "ce n'est que la caverne du mage, dont un nombre infini d'êtres supérieurs à notre espèce se plaisent à changer les décorations: mais tel que puisse se trouver ce lieu, et quels que soient ceux qui l'habitent, tout y préviendra vos désirs:—n'est-il pas vrai, mon père?" continua-t-elle en haussant la voix.

"Oui, sans doute," répondit le mage, en paroissant subitement à mes yeux, et s'avançant vers moi d'un air riant, "le prince Alasi sera traité ici comme il a traité ma chère Firouzka, et de plus il possedera, s'il veut, à jamais cette perle précieuse que je lui avois confiée. Allons qu'on serve à l'instant le banquet de noce et que tout s'arrange pour ce grand événement." Il n'eut pas plutôt prononcé ces paroles, que la caverne changea d'aspect, prit une forme ovale et bornée, et parut toute incrustée de pâles saphirs. Sur un divan en demi cercle se trouvèrent rangés des musiciens et des musiciennes qui charmèrent nos oreilles par un concert mélodieux, tandis que de leurs têtes, environnées de rayons, nous recevions une lumière plus pure et plus douce que nous auroient donnée un millier de flambeaux.

Autour d'une table, couverte d'excellents mets et de vins exquis, où nous étions placés, couroient de tous côtés des jeunes garçons persans et des petites filles georgiennes qui s'empressoient à nous servir.

Tous étoient aussi blancs et aussi gracieux que le jasmin qui couronnoit leur blonds cheveux; à chacun de leurs mouvements les robes de gaze qui les couvroient à demi, exhaloient les plus suaves parfums de l'Arabie heureuse.

Après le repas, qui fut fort gai, et pendant lequel Firouzka, qui ne pouvoit si tôt oublier le rôle de Firouz, fit mille agréables niches aux enfans qui nous versoient à boire, le mage ordonna un profond silence et s'adressant à moi: "Vous êtes sans doute surpris, roi de Kharesme, qu'avec le pouvoir que j'ai, je me suis donné la peine d'aller chez vous réclamer votre protection pour le trésor qu'on m'avoit confié. Vous ne comprenez pas mieux la raison du déguisement de Firouzka, et pourquoi on vous a

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laissé si longtems en proie à un délire que vous ne compreniez guères, et qui pouvoit si aisément être expliqué. Sachez donc que les Shirvaniens de tous tems mutins, et mécontens de leurs maîtres, avoient commencé leurs murmures sur ce que Tilanshah n'avoit point d'enfans; mais quand enfin la reine son épouse devint grosse, ils n'en parlèrent que plus haut et plus insolemment. 'Il faut qu'elle ait un fils!' crièrent-ils autour de la citadelle royale, 'nous ne voulons pas d'une princesse qui nous mettroit sous le joug d'un prince étranger. Il faut absolument qu'elle ait un fils.' La pauvre reine avoit bien assez de son mal sans de telles alarmes: elle dépérissoit à vue d'œil. Tilanshah vint me consulter. 'Il faut tromper ces insensés,' lui dis-je, 'c'est encore plus qu'ils ne méritent. Si la reine accouche d'une fille, faites-la passer pour un garçon, et pour ne pas s'en fier à des nourrices envoyez-la ici: ma femme Soudabé l'élévra avec une tendresse de mère, et quand il en sera tems je ne lui epargnerai pas mes soins! Cet expédient rendit la reine à la vie. Firouzka naquit, on la nomma Firouz; sous ce nom sa naissance fut célébrée par des réjouissances publiques; et Soudabé, qui la reçut des mains du roi, l'apporta dans ma caverne, d'où elle alloit de tems en tems se montrer à la cour. Nous lui donnâmes la double éducation qu'il convenoit à tout hazard de lui donner; elle recevoit les instructions de Soudabé et les miennes avec une égale avidité, et puis alloit se délasser de l'attention qu'elle nous avoit prêtées avec les Dives qui hantent ma caverne sous toutes sortes de formes. Ces esprits actifs étoient si attachées à Firouzka qu'elle n'avoit aucun caprice qu'ils ne fussent prêts à contenter. Les uns lui enseignoient les divers exercices convenables aux deux sexes, d'autres l'amusoient par des jeux agréables et des contes merveilleux; un grand nombre d'entre eux couroient le monde pour lui chercher des curiosités rares et des nouvelles intéressantes. Elle n'avoit jamais le tems de s'ennuyer, et revenoit avec des transports de joie à ma caverne après avoir été obligée de passer quelques jours à Samakhié. La princesse de Shirvan avoit commencé sa quatorzième année lorsque le Dive Ghulfaquaïr lui apporta malicieusement votre portrait. Dès lors elle perdit sa gaieté naturelle, ne fit que rêver et soupirer, et nous jetta dans une inquiétude aisée à concevoir: elle nous cachoit soigneusement le sujet de sa peine: et le Dive se gardoit bien de nous l'apprendre, il étoit d'ailleurs assez occupé à suivre vos pas pour lui rendre compte de tout ce que vous faisiez. L'humeur farouche qu'il vous attribuoit ne faisoit qu'irriter la passion de votre amante; elle brûloit d'envie de vous apprivoiser, et bientôt la suite des événemens lui en fit naître l'espoir. La révolte ouverte des Shirvaniens, la prière que me fit Tilanshah de ne point exposer sa fille à la fureur des rebelles, et d'en disposer comme je le jugerois à propos, enhardirent Firouzka à me parler librement. 'O vous qui me tenez lieu de père,' me dit-elle, 'vous qui m'avez enseigné à ne point avoir honte des passions que la nature nous donne, sachez que j'aime le prince Alasi, roi de Kharesme, et que je veux tâcher d'en être aimée, quelque difficile que cela soit. Il n'est plus question de cacher mon sexe pour régner sur un peuple destructeur de toute ma famille, et que j'aurai à jamais en horreur, mais je crois devoir continuer mon déguisement pour m'insinuer dans le cœur que je veux posséder. Alasi neglige les femmes—c'est sous le nom d'ami que je dois lui faire sentir leur pouvoir. Daignez conduire mes pas vers lui—demandez sa protection pour moi comme étant le fils du roi de Shirvan:—il est trop

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généreux pour vous la refuser, et je vous devrai un bonheur sans laquelle la vie me sera odieuse.' Je ne fus point surpris du discours de Firouzka ; elle étoit femme, et vouloit un époux, rien n'étoit si naturel ;—je me contentai donc de la questionner sur la manière dont elle vous avoit connu. Elle me conta tout, et me parla de vous d'un ton qui me fit juger que la contradiction ne feroit que la rendre malheureuse. Alors je lui dis : ' Je vous menerai au roi de Kharesme sous le nom de Firouz, parceque je compte sur votre prudence et la fermeté d'âme que je vous connois ; vous aurez besoin de l'un et de l'autre ; car j'ai découvert par mes lumières astrologiques que vous aurez une rivale redoutable, dont l'heure de triomphe seroit celle de votre désespoir éternel. Au reste, si jamais vous avez besoin d'un secours surnaturel, brûlez vos cheveux, et mes Dives iront à l'instant recevoir vos ordres.' Vous savez le reste, roi de Kharesme," continua le mage. " Firouz a bien réussi pour Firouzka, *il* a séduit votre cœur par les amusantes folies, *elle* le doit fixer par son amour et la sagesse dont elle ne s'est jamais écartée dans des momens dont peu de femmes auroient surmonté le danger."

" Oh ! j'ai couru grand risque de perdre ce cœur qui m'a tant coûté," s'écria la princesse de Shirvan, " et j'en eusse perdu au moins une partie sans les Dives officieux que j'appellai à mon secours au dépens de ma belle chevelure, et qui représentèrent si bien Rondabah, Amru et Kali ;—qu'en dites vous Alasi ? "—" Que je chérirai à jamais le motif de cette injustice," répondis-je, un peu troublé.

" Ma fille," dit le mage, " c'est sur votre soupçon de l'inconstance de son cœur que tombe le mot d'injustice que le prince Alasi vient de proférer ; car il ne sauroit ignorer que chaque être a le droit d'employer toutes sortes de moyens pour écarter de lui ce qui lui nuit ou peut lui nuire, et que les mouvemens de colère ou de crainte qui nous y poussent sont excités en nous par l'âme vivifiante et conservatrice de la nature ;—mais les heures s'écoulent, il est tems que vous recueillez le fruit de vos peines réciproques. Recevez, roi de Kharesme, la princesse Firouzka de ma main ;—emportez-la dans la chambre nuptiale, et puissiez-vous y être embrassés d'une abondante portion du feu que la terre renferme dans son sein, et où vont toutes les nuits se rallumer les flambeaux des cieux."

Nous pouvions nous passer des souhaits du mage ; les sentimens qui échauffoient nos cœurs suffisoient à notre félicité ; l'amitié, l'amour, avoient altérnativement leurs transports, et se confondoient dans des ravissemens inexprimables.

Firouzka n'avoit pas envie de dormir, elle me conta comme dans un moment le mage l'avoit guérie de sa blessure, me vanta beaucoup son pouvoir, et me conceilla de lui demander à voir son Pirée. Elle m'avoua qu'elle avoit été elle-même élevée dans la religion de Zoroastre, et qu'elle la croyoit la plus naturelle et la plus raisonnable de toutes. " Jugez," ajouta-t-elle, " si j'ai jamais pu me plaire aux absurdités du Koran. J'aurois voulu que tous vos docteurs Musulmans eussent eu le sort du Moullah qui m'excédoit d'ennui. L'instant où je l'engagea de se revêtir du costume d'une âne fut ravisant pour moi ;—j'aurois eu le même plaisir à arracher toutes les plumées de l'ange Gabriel pour le punir d'en avoir prêté une qui a écrit tant de sottises,—si toutefois, j'avois été assez imbécile pour croire ce conte."

Il y avoit eu un tems où de telles paroles m'auroient paru d'une impiété

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insoutenable ; elles ne me plaisoient guères encore alors, mais ces restes de scrupules ne pouvoient tenir contre les attrayantes caresses dont Firouzka accompagnoit chaque mot.

Un voluptueux sommeil s'empara enfin de nos sens, et nous ne nous réveillâmes que quand les oiseaux, par la vivacité de leurs chants, nous eurent appris qu'il étoit grand jour.

Surpris d'une musique à laquelle je ne devois pas m'attendre, je courus aux ouvertures de l'espèce de grotte, où nous nous trouvâmes, et vis qu'elles donnoient sur un jardin où étoit rassemblé tout ce que la nature a d'attrayant—la mer qui le bornoit, relevoit toutes les richesses que la terre étaloit à nos yeux. "Est-ce encore ici une illusion ?" demandai-je, "car ce ne peut être réellement la caverne du mage ?"—"C'en est une issue," me répondit Firouzka, "mais il vous faut plus d'un jour pour voir toutes les beautés de ces lieux. Le mage dit que tout est fait pour l'homme, et qu'il doit se saisir de son bien quand il le peut ;—il a employé une partie de sa vie à acquérir ce pouvoir,—il en jouit dans l'autre."

Je ne manquai pas de témoigner au mage un grand désir de voir son Pirée. "Vous en serez content," me dit-il, d'un air satisfait, "mais je ne puis vous y mener qu'après que vous aurez visité mes bains, et serez revêtus de robes convenables à la majesté du lieu."

Je consentis à tout pour plaire à Firouzka ; et dans la crainte de l'offenser je retins l'envie de rire qu'excitèrent les robes grotesques dont on nous affubla tous deux. Mais que devins-je en entrant dans le Pirée ? Jamais spectacle, excepté celui que m'a présenté ce funeste palais, m'a autant frappé de surprise et de terreur.

Le feu qu'adoroit le mage paroissoit sortir des entrailles de la terre, et s'élever jusqu'au-dessus des nues ! Sa flamme brilloit tantôt d'un éclat que les yeux ne pouvoient soutenir ; tantôt elle jettoit une lueur bleuâtre qui contribuoit à rendre les objets qui nous entouroient plus hideux encore qu'ils ne l'étoient en effet. Le grillage d'un ardent airain qui nous séparoit de ce Dieu effrayant, ne pouvoit entièrement me rassurer. Nous étions de tems en tems couverts de tourbillons d'étincelles, dont le mage se tenoit pour fort honoré, mais dont je me serois passé très volontiers. Dans la partie du temple où nous étions, les murailles étoient tapissées de cheveux de toutes les couleurs, que, de distance en distance, relevoient des pyramides de crânes humains qu'on avoit enchassés dans de l'or et de l'ébène. A tout ceci étoit joint une odeur de soufre et de bitume, qui transperçoit le cerveau et ôtoit la respiration. Je tremblois . . . mes jambes alloient se dérober sous moi . . . Firouzka me soutint. . . . "Sortons," lui dis-je tout bas, "ôte moi de la présence de ton Dieu, la tienne a seule pu me la faire soutenir un instant."

J'avois besoin, pour me refaire, du bon air que les Dives nous firent parvenir en perçant à jour la voûte de la caverne dans le lieu où nous avions soupé la veille, et qu'ils decorèrent d'une manière nouvelle,—sans oublier un repas exquis qui me mit en état d'écouter le mage avec plus de patience. Tout ce que me dit cet hôte redoutable sur sa religion ne m'étoit pas nouveau, et j'y fis peu d'attention ; mais sa morale me plut, parce qu'elle flattoit les passions et éteignoit les remords. Il nous vanta beaucoup son Pirée, nous apprit que les Dives l'avoient construit, mais que c'étoit lui-même qui l'avoit orné au hazard de sa vie. Je ne lui demandai aucune explication sur ce point ; je craignois même qu'il ne me la donnât, je ne

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pouvois penser à ces têtes de morts, à ces cheveux, qu'il appelloit ornemens, sans frémir,—j'aurois craint toutes choses en ce lieu si je n'eusse pas été aussi sûr que je l'étois du cœur de Firouzka.

Heureusement ce n'étoit qu'une fois par jour que j'étois obligé d'essuyer la conversation du mage; le reste du tems étoit employé dans toutes sortes d'amusemens et de plaisirs. Les Dives ne nous en laissoient pas manquer; et Firouzka les leur faisoit diversifier selon mes goûts. Ses soins empressés, sa tendresse ingénieuse répandoient une telle volupté sur tous mes momens, que je n'étois guères en état de les compter,—enfin, le présent m'avoit si bien fait oublier le passé, qu'il ne m'arriva pas une seule fois de me ressouvenir de mon royaume. Le mage ne fit que trop tôt finir cet espèce de délire. Un jour, jour malheureux!—il nous dit: "Nous allons nous séparer, mes chers enfans,—l'heure du bonheur après lequel je soupire depuis tant d'années, s'approche;—je suis attendu dans le palais du feu souterrain, où je vais nager dans des joies, et posséder des trésors que l'imagination de l'homme ne sauroit se représenter. Hélas! que n'est cette heure propice arrivée plutôt!—l'inexorable mort ne m'auroit pas ravi ma chère Soudabé, elle dont les charmes n'avoient jamais éprouvé le pouvoir rigoureux du tems. Nous aurions partagé ensemble cette félicité parfaite que ni les accidents, ni la vicissitude des choses de la vie ne sauroient altérer au lieu où je vais."

"Ah! où est ce séjour divin?" m'écriai-je, "où l'on vit dans l'heureuse éternité d'une tendresse mutuelle! Laissez-nous vous y suivre!"—"Vous le pourrez si vous adorez mon Dieu," répondit le mage, "si vous rendez hommage aux puissances qui le servent, si vous méritez sa faveur par les sacrifices qu'il demande."—"J'adorerai quel Dieu que ce soit," dis-je, "s'il m'accorde de vivre à jamais avec Firouzka, affranchi de l'horreur de voir la pale maladie ou le fer meurtrier attaquer ses beaux jours—que faut-il faire de plus?"—"Il faut," répliqua le mage, "faire recevoir la religion de Zoroastre dans vos états, abattre les mosquées, élever des Pirées à leur place, et enfin sacrifier sans pitié tous ceux que vous ne pouvez convertir à la vraie foi. C'est là ce que j'ai fait moi-même, quoique je n'aie pu agir aussi ouvertement que vous pouvez le faire,—témoins tous ces cheveux dont les murs de mon Pirée sont couverts,—chers témoins! qui vont me faire ouvrir les portes de la seule demeure où on jouit d'une félicité permanante."

"Allons donc bien vite faire couper des têtes," dit Firouzka, "et nous faire un trésor de cheveux! Vous conviendrez, cher Alasi, que le sacrifice des insensés qui ne voudront pas nous croire est bien peu de chose pour obtenir le bien suprême de nous aimer éternellement."

Ces paroles flatteuses de Firouzka furent suivies de mon plein consentement à tout; et le mage, au comble de ses vœux, reprit: "Je m'estime fort heureux, roi de Kharesme, de vous avoir enfin convaincu de la vérité de ma croyance; j'en avois plusieurs fois désesperé, et je n'eusse pas pris tant de peine avec vous si vous n'aviez pas été l'époux de la fille de Tilanshah, mon ami, et mon disciple. Quels honneurs votre conversion ne va-t-elle pas m'attirer dans le palais du feu souterrain! Partez donc dès cette heure même; vous trouverez un vaisseau tout equipé sur cette rive. Vous serez reçu avec acclamation dans vote royaume; faites-y tout le bien que vous pourrez, et souvenez-vous que de détruire ceux qui sont obstinés dans l'erreur est compté pour un grand bien par le

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Dieu sévère que vous avez promis de servir. Quand vous jugerez avoir mérité votre récompense, rendez-vous à Istakhar, et brûlez-y sur la terrasse des phares les chevelures de tous ceux que vous aurez fait périr dans une si bonne cause. L'odorat des Dives sera frappé de cette agréable senteur, ils vous découvriront l'escalier rapide, vous ouvriront le portail d'ébène,— je vous recevrai dans mes bras, et vous ferai rendre les hommages qui vous sont dûs."

Ce fut ainsi que je cédai à la dernière séduction du mage ; je me serais moqué de ses sermons, mais mon cœur étoit trop interressé dans ses promesses pour pouvoir y résister. J'eus un moment la pensée qu'elles pouvoient être trompeuses, mais bientôt je décidai que tout devoit être hazardé pour le bien promis.

Sans doute, le mage, excité par l'ambition et la convoitise, fit le même calcul, et s'y trouva deçu, comme le sont tous les malheureux qui viennent ici.

Le fanatique adorateur du feu voulut nous voir embarquer ; il nous embrassa affectueusement sur le rivage, et nous recommanda de garder auprès de nous, comme des serviteurs à toute épreuve, les vingt nègres qui devoient faire la manœuvre de notre vaisseau. A peine avions-nous mis à la voile, que nous entendîmes un fracas épouvantable, comme celui que fait le tonnerre quand il frappe les montagnes, et comble les vallées de leur décombres. Nous vîmes le rocher que nous venions de quitter sécrouler dans la mer. Nous entendîmes les cris de joie dont les Dives faisoient retentir l'air, et nous jugeames que le mage avoit déjà pris la route d'Istakhar.

Nos vingt nègres étoient si bons navigateurs, si adroits, si alertes, que nous les aurions pris pour être du cortège surnaturel du mage, s'ils ne nous avoient dit eux-mêmes qu'ils étoient simplement les humbles adorateurs du feu. Comme leur chef, nommé Zouloulou, paroissoit très initié dans les mystères de la caverne, je lui demandai ce qu'étoient devenus les pages et les petites georgiennes que nous avions pris en amitié. Il me répondit que les intelligences qui les avoient amenés au mage en avoient disposé, sans doute pour le mieux, et qu'on pouvoit bien s'en rapporter à elles.

Mes sujets célébrèrent mon retour et mon mariage par des transports de joie qui me firent rougir des intentions que j'avais contre eux. Ils avoient trouvé Firouz aimable, ils trouvèrent Firouzka divine sous les habits de son sexe : ma mère, surtout, l'accabla de caresses ; mais elle changea de ton quand nous trouvâmes que Motaleb, qu'elle venoit d'établir son premier ministre, avoit mis le désordre dans toutes les affaires dont il étoit chargé. Elle avoit pris en fantaisie ce Vizir ignorant, et trouvoit fort mauvais que nous fussions en colère contre lui. Firouzka, qui s'embarrasoit très peu de ce qu'elle pensoit, me disoit tout bas : "Motaleb a une bonne provision de cheveux, faisons-lui couper la tête." Je me contentai de le déposer. Je mis à sa place un foible vieillard qui ne s'opposoit à rien, et qui ne manqua pas de faire démolir la grande mosquée de Derbend aussitôt que je lui en eus donné l'ordre.

Ce coup d'état etonna tout le monde. La reine ma mère accourut pour me demander ce que je prétendois par une telle impiété ? "N'entendre plus parler de votre Mahomet et de ses rêveries," lui répondit tranquillement Firouzka, "et établir dans le Kharesme la religion de Zoroastre comme la seule digne d'être crue." A cette réponse la bonne

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princesse ne put plus se contenir, elle m'accabla d'injures, et fit contre nous des imprécations qui n'ont que trop eu leur effet. Je l'écoutai sans ressentiment ; mais Firouzka prévalut sur moi de la faire conduire dans sa tour, où bientôt elle finit sa vie dans l'amertume et les regrets de m'avoir mis au monde.

Les iniquités ne me coutoient plus : j'étois résolu à tout pour me délivrer des craintes que mon amour effréné avoit conçues. Je trouvai d'abord si peu de résistance à mes volontés que Firouzka, qui voyoit les courtisans et l'armée s'y soumettre sans peine, me disoit : " Où prendrons-nous des cheveux ? Que de tresses je vois qui nous conviendroient à merveilles, si les têtes qui les portent étoient un peu plus rétives ; il faut espérer qu'elles se raviseront, ou nous courons risque de n'aller jamais à Istakhar." Elles se ravisèrent en effet ; la plus part de ceux qui alloient aux Pirées que j'avois fait élever, n'attendoient qu'un moment favorable pour éclater contre moi. Nous découvrîmes plusieurs complots ; et alors commencèrent les sacrifices. Firouzka voulut agir avec ordre :—comme elle connoissoit les talens de Zouloulou, elle l'établit notre grand prédicateur. Elle le faisoit tous les jours monter sur une haute tribune qu'on avoit érigée au milieu de la grande place où s'assembloit le peuple ; là, le nègre effronté, revêtu d'une robe d'un rouge éclatant, avec une contenance assurée, et une voix perçante, débitoit son sermon, tandis que ses dix-neuf confrères, qui se tenoient au pied des degrès de la tribune, le sabre nu à la main, coupoient les têtes de tous ceux qui ne vouloient pas croire ce qu'on leur prescrivoit, et prenoient bien soin de s'emparer de leurs cheveux.

Le pouvoir étoit encore de mon côté ; j'étois aimé du soldat, qui en général s'embarrasse très peu du Dieu qu'il sert pourvu qu'il soit caressé de son roi.

La persécution fit l'effet qu'elle fait toujours, les peuples s'empressoient à être martyrs ;—ils accouroient de toutes mes provinces pour se moquer de Zouloulou, que rien ne déconcertoit, et pour se faire couper la tête.

Le carnage devint enfin si grand que l'armée commença à s'en scandaliser. Motaleb l'excitoit à la révolte. Il envoya secrètement au nom de l'armée, des grands, et du peuple, offrir le royaume de Kharesme à Rondabah, et l'inviter à venir venger la mort de son père, de son frère, et ses propres injures.

Nous n'avions pas manqué d'avis sur ces trames sourdes, car les flatteurs se détachent rarement d'un roi tant que la couronne brille sur sa tête ; mais nous ne prîmes véritablement l'alarme que quand nous nous aperçûmes que nous devenions le parti le plus foible. Mes gardes avoient déjà permis qu'on maltraita les nègres plus d'une fois ; il en avoit coûté les deux oreilles à Zouloulou, qui fut le premier à nous conseiller de ne pas perdre le fruit de nos travaux.

Par les soins et la vigilance de ce zélé serviteur, tout fut bientôt prêt pour notre voyage. Au milieu de la nuit je quittai mon royaume,—que j'avois fait se révolter presqu'entièrement contre moi,—d'un cœur aussi triomphant que si j'étois venu de le conquérir. Firouzka me persuada de lui laisser reprendre ses habits d'homme, et c'est pourquoi le caliphe Vathek a méconnu son sexe. Nous montâmes, elle et moi, deux chevaux arabes aussi superbes, aussi véloces que Shebdid et Bariz les mémorables coursiers de Khosrou ; les vingt nègres conduisoient chacun un chameau dont dix étoient chargés de cheveux.

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Quoi que nous fussions fort empressés d'arriver au terme de notre voyage, nous ne nous hâtions pas trop. C'étoit, sans doute, par présentiment que nous ne pouvions pas nous résoudre d'abandoner les plaisirs présens pour ceux que nous nous promettions dans l'avenir. Nous campions tous les soirs, et nous nous arrêtions des jours entiers dans les lieux de délices que notre route nous présentoit. Depuis une demi lune nous jouissions des beautés de la vallée de Maravanahar, lorsqu'une nuit je m'éveilla en sursaut, agité par un songe confusément horrible ; mais que devins-je en ne trouvant pas Firouzka à mon côté ? Je me levai tout hors de moi-même, et sortis de ma tente pour la chercher, quand je la rencontrai toute éperdue qui venoit à moi. " Sauvons-nous, mon cher Alasi," me dit-elle ; " montons à cheval à l'instant,—gagnons le désert qui est à peu de parasanges d'ici,—Zouloulou en connoit les détours, et nous mettra à l'abri du danger qui nous menace."—" Je ne crains rien, ma bien-aimée," lui répondis-je, " puisque je te retrouve ; mais je te suivrai partout où tu voudras aller."

Au point du jour nous entrâmes dans un bois si touffu qu'à peine les rayons du soleil pouvoient y pénétrer. " Arrêtons-nous ici," me dit Firouzka, " et que je vous conte l'étrange aventure qui m'est arrivée. Je dormois auprès de vous, lorsque Zouloulou en me reveillant avec précaution, m'est venu dire à l'oreille que Rondabah n'étoit qu'à cent pas de nous, qu'elle s'étoit un peu éloignée de l'armée qu'elle conduisoit en Kharesme, et qu'elle étoit à se reposer sous un pavillon, sans autre suite qu'un petit nombre de gardes et quelques femmes, qui tous dormoient profondément. A ces paroles j'ai été saisie de crainte et de fureur ; je me suis souvenue de la prédiction du mage, et m'étant bien vite habillée, j'ai tâté si mon sabre étoit bien tranchant. 'Que prétendez-vous faire ?' m'a dit l'eunuque ; 'modérez ce transport, et apprenez que vous ne pouvez rien sur la vie de Rondabah. Le mage m'a ordonné de vous en avertir, si l'occasion s'en présentoit, et de vous assurer que vous péririez vous-même dans l'entreprise, car une puissance à laquelle rien ne peut s'opposer protège la princesse de Ghilan ; mais si vous voulez vous calmer et suivre mon avis, nous lui ferons plus de mal que si nous lui coupions la tête.' Tout en parlant ainsi nous nous étions éloignés de votre tente, et enfin parvenus au lieu où nous adressions nos pas. Zouloulou, voyant que je gardois un profond silence, m'a dit : 'Vous faites bien de vous en fier à moi,—je vais faire respirer à tous ces gens-ci une odeur que les empêchera de se réveiller de quelque tems ; nous pénétrerons sans peine jusqu'au pavillon, et avec une pommade que voilà, et qui a la vertu de rendre affreux le plus beau visage, nous barbouillerons à plaisir celui de votre ennemie !' Tout s'est passé comme Zouloulou l'entendoit ; mais Rondabah, dont nous avions laissé le sommeil au cours de la nature, m'a presque empêchée de finir mon opération. Je la frottois si fortement qu'elle s'est réveillée en faisant un cri de douleur et d'effroi. Je me suis hâtée d'achever l'ouvrage, puis ayant détaché un miroir qui pendoit à la ceinture d'une de ses femmes, et le lui ayant présenté, je lui ai dit : 'Avouez, majestueuse princesse, que ce petit monstre de Firouz est bien galant, et se flatte que ce fard, qu'il vient de vous appliquer, vous fera souvenir de lui.' Je ne sais si le mâle courage de Rondabah a été vaincu par l'effroi que lui a causé ma présence, ou par le désespoir de se trouver l'objet le plus hideux du monde, mais elle s'est évanouie et nous l'avons laissée reprendre ses sens à loisir. Le

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plaisir d'avoir empêché ce triomphe de ma rivale que le mage m'a prédit, a bientôt fait place à la crainte que nous ne fussions poursuivi dans peu, mais nous voilà en sûreté : reposons-nous ici; mon sein, encore palpitant des justes alarmes que j'ai eu, vous servira d'oreiller. Hélas ! ni Firouzka ni Firouz n'ont jamais été cruels que quand on leur a disputé votre cœur ! "

Le tour séduisant que Firouzka donna à sa courte narration ne me fit pas prendre le change sur l'atrocité et l'indécence du crime qu'elle venoit de commettre;—je m'étonnois qu'avec un cœur tendre et sensible à l'excès pour moi, elle fut capable des acharnemens les plus frénétiques et des cruautés les plus horribles ;—mais plus que tout, j'étois frappé de ce que Zouloulou lui avoit dit pour l'empêcher de pousser l'attentat plus loin. " La puissance qui protège la vie de Rondabah," disois-je, " aime sans doute les bons, car Rondabah est bonne ! Ce n'est donc pas cette pure et suprême puissance qui va recevoir dans son palais des méchans tels que nous. Mais si elle est supérieure à toutes les autres, qu'allons nous devenir ? O Mahomet ! O Prophète chéri du créateur du monde ! Tu dois m'avoir abandonné sans ressource—il ne me reste d'asile que chez tes ennemis ! " Cette pensée de désespoir fut la conclusion du dernier de mes remords. C'étoit la princesse de Ghilan qui les excitoit toujours, mais en vain, dans mon cœur.

J'aidai à Firouzka à me tirer de la rêverie qui l'inquiétoit ;—je ne pouvois rappeler le passé—probablement je ne l'eusse pas voulu—il ne me restoit qu'à me jetter les yeux fermés dans l'abîme de l'avenir.

Une douce pluie de tendres baisers fit disparoître ce nuage ; mais Firouzka en m'ennivrant d'amour redoubloit la crainte que j'avois de la perdre par quelque événement aussi imprévu que celui qui venoit d'arriver ; de son côté, elle ne pouvoit se rassurer même sur la laideur de Rondabah : elle regrettoit le tems que nous avions perdu dans le chemin qui, à ce qu'elle croyoit, et que je m'efforçois de croire, aboutissoit au vrai séjour du bonheur. Ainsi d'un commun accord, et à la grande joie de nos vingt eunuques nègres, nous fîmes la plus extrême diligence pour arriver à Istakhar.

Il étoit déjà nuit lorsque nous montâmes sur la terrasse des Phares ; nous la parcourûmes avec une sorte d'horreur, malgré tout ce que nous nous disions de tendre et d'encourageant. Le firmament n'offroit point à nos yeux la douce lueur de la lune ; les étoiles seules y brilloient ; mais leur vacillante clarté ne faisoit que redoubler la sombre grandeur des objets qui frappoient notre vue. Nous ne regrettions aucune des beautés, ou des richesses, de la sphère que nous allions quitter ; nous ne songions pas non plus à celles dont nous pouvions aller jouir, nous n'étions occupés que de l'espoir d'habiter un lieu où nous ne serions jamais séparés,—et cependant des liens invisibles sembloient encor nous retenir sur la terre.

Nous ne pûmes nous empêcher de frémir en voyant que les nègres avoient achevé de former l'énorme pile de cheveux. D'une main tremblante nous approchâmes les torches qui devoient les allumer, et pensâmes mourir de frayeur quand la terre s'ouvrit devant nous en mille éclats épouvantables. A la vue de l'escalier dont la descente étoit si facile, à celle des cierges qui l'éclairoient, nous fûmes un peu rassurés ; nous nous embrassâmes avec transport et nous prenant par la main, nous commençions à descendre avec précautions, quand les vingt nègres—auxquels nous ne

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songions plus—se précipitèrent si impétueusement sur nous que nous allâmes donner de la tête contre le portail d'ébène.

Je ne vous décrirai point la terrible impression que fit sur nous l'aspect de ce lieu—tous ceux qui sont ici en ont éprouvé une semblable;—mais un objet de terreur qui nous fut particulier fut la rencontre du mage. Il se promenoit avec la main droite sur son cœur parmi la foule lugubre et errante;—il nous apperçoit—les flammes qui dévoroient son cœur sortent par ses yeux; il nous darde un regard effroyable, et s'éloigne de nous avec précipitation. . . . Un moment après un méchant Dive accosta Firouzka. "Rondabah," lui dit-il, "a recouvré sa beauté—elle vient de monter sur le trône de Kharesme,—l'heure de son triomphe est celle de votre désespoir étérnel."

Enfin Eblis nous déclara toute l'horreur de notre sort. Quel Dieu nous avons servi! Quel arrêt épouvantable il nous a prononcé! Quoi! nous devons nous haïr, nous qui nous sommes tant aimés! Qui étions venus ici pour ne jamais cesser de nous aimer! Nous haïr éternellement! O funeste, exécrable pensée, anéantis notre être dans cet instant!

En sanglottant alternativement ces mots, Alasi et Firouzka se jettèrent dans les bras l'un de l'autre, et un morne silence régna longtems parmi cette malheureuse compagnie. Enfin Vathek le rompit, en demandant au troisième prince de conter son histoire: sa curiosité n'étoit point encore éteinte. Il s'étoit reservé pour le dernier supplice d'étouffer dans ces cœurs criminels toutes les passions, excepté celles de la haine et du désespoir.

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Memorandum on Prison Reform*

Especially as to the Treatment of Political Prisoners

By Wilfrid Scawen Blunt

As the question of prison reform has become one of urgency in connection with the Suffragette movement and the many women who have recently undergone detention for offences more or less political, I offer these remarks founded on an experience of some years ago, which I think may be of use.

In the early months of 1888 I served a sentence under the Crimes Act in Ireland of two months in Galway and Kilmainham gaols. My treatment was that of an ordinary prisoner with hard labour, though hard labour was not named in the sentence—that is to say, I was made to wear prison dress, sleep on a plank bed, pick oakum and perform the other duties assigned to hard labour prisoners. I was forbidden to receive visits or write letters or to have any books to read but a Bible and a Prayer Book except during the last week of my confinement, which was strictly silent and separate during the whole two months. With the exception of the plank bed, which prevented sleep for more than a very short portion of the long winter nights passed in darkness, I found little to complain of in the way of physical hardship. The cells were clean and fairly well aired, the food sufficient, and the exercise, a dull round in the prison yard, more than I needed. The oakum picking was so little a trouble to me that I came to be glad to secrete a piece of the tarred rope on Saturday nights so as to have it to pick on Sundays. It gave an occupation to the hands and slightly to the brain of the kind that knitting gives. It was pleasant to the sense of smell and to the eye. The life

* Forwarded to the Home Secretary, Mr. Winston Churchill, M.P., February 25, 1910.

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under these physical heads was hardly worse than one has to put up with on a sea voyage and may pass without special comment. The suffering inflicted on prisoners under the present system I found to be of a different kind—moral, not physical. But this was severe.

The silent and separate system in the treatment of prisoners was, I believe, introduced as a humanitarian reform with the idea of preventing the less depraved among these from contamination with companions wholly vicious. Some reform of this sort no doubt was needed. But I doubt if those who devised it either understood its full effects or intended that it should be pushed as far as has been the case. Carried out as we see it under the present regulations it is a punishment in addition to the loss of liberty which I do not think society has any right to inflict for less than the most serious crimes, while its effect on the sufferers is wholly evil. Judges who pass long sentences on comparatively innocent breakers of the law, and visiting justices who go the round of cells periodically and find all neat and clean, do not understand the severity of the suffering inflicted by leaving the minds of prisoners for long periods of months and years deprived of any spiritual sustenance whatever. It is starvation of a kind quite as real as the cutting off of meat and drink, and more enduringly pernicious.

Perhaps I am the better qualified to speak on this head because my experience in the two gaols, Galway and Kilmainham, is diverse in regard to it. Galway gaol was an old-fashioned rambling place with cells of various sizes, and the one I was given was well lighted, showing a good patch of sky and the windows of a building opposite, so that there was some pleasure to be got from watching the sea-gulls as they hovered overhead, and the jackdaws and sparrows to which it was even possible to throw bread-crumbs. The discipline was lax and the warders, most of them Nationalists, were entirely friendly. I was allowed to do many small things contrary to strict regulation, such as to sit on my blanket on the floor, instead of perched on a stool, to have a Bible with good print instead of the hardly readable regulation Bible, and even to scribble verses on its fly-leaves. These small infractions of the prison code were connived at, if not permitted,

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and they mitigated the rigour of the cast-iron laws which rule gaol life, and so made it tolerable. The warders always stopped on their rounds for a few minutes to chat with me; they were polite and kind; the Governor of the gaol paid me a daily visit of a quarter of an hour; the chaplain brought me little packets of snuff besides his spiritual consolation. I was not unhappy. In the first fortnight I read the whole of the historical books of the Old Testament, which for a political prisoner and for one who, as in my case, was acquainted with the East are most consolatory reading from their descriptions of free life in the desert and the trust they inspire in a final justice for the oppressed and the promises they hold out of vengeance on the wicked. "Thou shalt bring my soul out of trouble, and in Thy mercy Thou shalt destroy my enemies." Thus Galway gaol was for me a house of penance rather than of punishment, and my time in it, for the first fortnight, a kind of spiritual retreat. I still look back on it with affection as a softening influence in my life.

A change, however, came with the visit of the Official Inspector of prisons from Dublin. He happened to be a connection of my own, Charlie Bourke, a brother of the late Lord Mayo, and being a violent Unionist, he made it his business to put a stop to the irregularities he detected in the treatment accorded me. My quarto Bible was taken from me and a regulation one with small print, which hurt my eyes, was substituted. The friendly warders were reprimanded and eventually dismissed, not nominally on my account but later on as occasion offered on charges of drunkenness (all prison warders in Ireland at that time were addicted to drink and so easily dismissable), and the small amenities of my life were stopped. Nevertheless, as long as I remained at Galway, things went fairly well. It was only on my removal to Kilmainham that I was subjected to the full rigours of prison discipline and came to understand the extent of its demoralising influence, and the hatred it excites against society, and what is called the "law and order" which maintains it.

Kilmainham was a gaol of the scientific modern type, with cells all of one pattern set in a circle round an enclosed central hall in such a way as to enable the chief warder to have his eye on each one of them and so to prevent any irregularity on the part

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of his subordinates. The discipline was thus perfectly preserved and to the prisoners a cause of constant irritation as to spying. Here, no kind of familiarity was permitted nor the least show of kindness between the warder and the men under his charge. All was gloom and severity. At Galway, there had been a pleasant feeling, or what was near it, between them, at least when the Governor and Chief Warder were out of sight, the warders and prisoners being much of the same class, peasants born, with the same natural ideas, virtues, vices, and weaknesses. The Galway prisoners were none of them in gaol for serious crime, the most criminal among them being a man who had got drunk and stabbed a sheep at a fair. The most of them were very pious Catholics, as their demeanour in the prison chapel testified, and I suspect that their moral lives were at least as good as the warders' and better than my own. At Kilmainham, on the contrary, our inmates were thieves and pickpockets, the riffraff of the Dublin streets, and a stricter rule was doubtless excusable. But, excusable or not, the effect was of the most deadening kind, deadening and at the same time exasperating. It is not good for any man to be treated for weeks and months only with contempt, and prisoners shut off in separate cells from their fellow-creatures and subjected to ignominious treatment from callous masters (for such their warders were) lose all their self-respect as men and acquire the ways of slaves. Silence and solitude when prolonged beyond a certain point of time have a physical effect upon the nerves and brain allied to mental disease and play havoc with the imagination. The sense of proportion in things is destroyed and the mind revolves upon the axis of its own imaginings to its spiritual hurt. I, myself, though I had nothing really to reproach myself with, for all my crime had been to call a meeting in a proclaimed district at which I had not been given time to finish so much as a single sentence, felt myself drawn into sympathy with the Dublin criminals, my fellow-sufferers, and into revolt with them against the barbarities of civilisation. How much more must it have been with these poor wretches condemned to long terms of an iron system of repression for deeds of which they were really in their hearts ashamed. Everything was done in Kilmainham to shut us out of the poor natural

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pleasures of light, air, and sunshine, which the least beast, bird, or insect can enjoy. The windows of our cells high up and out of reach were glazed with ground glass to prevent us from seeing the smallest patch of sky. All our actions were regulated as by machinery, and no word was spoken to us but of command. The prison chaplain was a man with a smug, false face, chosen for his subservience to the Castle, a weigher of his words and an economiser of his sympathies. The doctor was much such another, and the Governor, a worthy man, I believe, at heart, was officially reserved in his brief visits to our cells. The silence of the place was a systematised oppression worse to my mind than the noisy discomfort of the rude prisons I had seen in the East, where men, perhaps in chains, are at least permitted to sit together in the sun and talk, if it is only of their sufferings. How willingly would I not have exchanged the cleanliness of my Kilmainham cell for the dirty prison yard at Aleppo, where I had seen murderers and honest men placed cheek by jowl on a common footing of humanity. Here there was no humanity; it was forbidden by the rules and regulations of the Prison Board.

I left Kilmainham at the end of my two months in a spirit of revolt against all society, a feeling which I am certain is the predominant one in every released prisoner at its gates. I left it without a smile, with the eightpence-halfpenny in my hand which I had earned by my good conduct—without a smile, though the worthy Governor of the gaol had been good enough to tell me mine had been exemplary, and had added, good man, that instead of the customary advice given to prisoners on their discharge he would inform me of a pleasant piece of news—his wife had been brought to bed two days before and it had been decided by him and her to name their child after me.

Such is an imperfect record of my experience of twenty-two years ago in a gaol managed on the silent and separate system. Certain alleviations in the treatment have, I understand, been since introduced, but the silence and the separation still continue without practical change in all English prisons. It is this part of prison discipline that I would see modified—I do not say abolished, for seclusion has its uses—but humanised and made less absolute.

Apart from crimes of violence which need to be treated

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penally—and for my part I should be quite prepared to see corporal punishment of the severest kind inflicted in cases of rape, wife-beating, cruelty to children and the like, with capital punishment still for murder—I do not see any advantage in severity of treatment, for crime unattended by violence, more than is necessary to keep loafers out of our gaols. The loss of liberty is in itself sufficient penalty to deter all but the most hardened, and for these hard labour is probably the only cure. Yet, even with the habitual thief, though he should be made to dig till he sweats and be put to labour of the least lenient kind, I see no reason that his taskmaster, the prison warder, should deny him a cheerful word, or look upon him sourly. Nor do I understand that the prison dress which he is forced to wear should be made the obvious garb of infamy it is. The Spanish Inquisition in its day clothed the heretics it burned in fantastic robes with the object of robbing its victims of all human sympathy. Our twentieth-century prisons should make an end of this barbarity. It is an infamy to clothe a grown man, used to decent dress, in a boy's jacket and knickerbockers and deny him skirt enough to cover his loins. I felt the indignity of this so strongly at the outset of my prison life that I rebelled (it was my only rebellion) and made appeal to the visiting justices, with the result that a skirted coat was ordered me. Why should not all the convicts be thus provided? It should be no part of the prison system to degrade, even while it punishes the most severely.

Beyond and above this class of the hardened criminal there need, I think, be two classes only—the one which should be in the nature of a reformatory rather than of what are now the second and third divisions, and the other identical with what is now the first division.

My second class, which is by far the most important, should be treated in some sort as a school, of which the warders should be the teachers as well as guardians. This would, of course, require a quite different class of guardian from that from which our present warders are drawn and one much more highly paid. The kind of men for the work should be that which is found in Scotland Yard, and the result, I am convinced. would be well

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worth the cost. These should control the working shops by day and preside over the common midday meal, and the common recreation hour in the evening. The men would still be locked up in their separate cells at night, and also for one whole day in the week so as to give the warders their Sunday holiday, but it should be with books, writing materials, and some solitary game to play, a cup and ball, a box of wooden bricks or one of movable letters.

With regard to the hour of recreation I have just mentioned, nothing struck me more strongly in prison than the immense waste of opportunity displayed—an opportunity of good, whether religious or of instruction, which nobody made use of. It has been said that "a prison is a convent without God"—and such is the fact. Gaol life has the austerity without the sanctifying motive. Yet it might easily be made, at least in Ireland, into a nursery of saints. In England, where we do not ask for saints, it might be turned to intellectual profit by any zealous humanitarian who would give his evening hours to the work of penny reading and lecturing. At present the English prison is a school without a teacher. I throw out this idea believing that devoted men would not be wanting for the work of instruction were it officially encouraged.

My first and highest class of all would be what is now the first division of misdemeanants. This should include, with others already enjoying it, all who for their opinion's sake have disobeyed the law. The prisoners under this head should be treated more or less as prisoners of war are treated—honourably, that is, and as opponents whom the law has captured. England, I believe, is the only country of Europe where no distinction is made between political and ordinary offenders. It is time the two classes should be recognised as separate and the distinction legally drawn. The absence of it brings the law into contempt through the impossibility of persuading the public that a conscientious breaker of the law is a real criminal. And this leads me to what is the most important part of what I set myself to write, the position of the Government where it finds itself, as now, determinedly opposed by a small party of religious or political reformers who persist in infractions of the law to further their opinions.

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As the law at present stands, it is probably impossible to deal satisfactorily with cases where assaults are committed or damage done to property so as to draw public attention to a public grievance, and until the magistrates who judge such cases are empowered to decide upon the motive of the act, whether it is public or private, there will always be confusion. A man resists the police in the execution of their duty, he breaks a plate-glass window or he strikes a Prime Minister with a cane. He is arrested. His motive may be anything. It may be political, or it may be a personal grievance, or that he is hungry and wants to be lodged in prison, or merely that he is a drunken rowdy. The magistrate already possesses a certain option in these cases, but I think it should be obligatory on him, where the evidence is that the motive is honestly a public one, that he should send the prisoner to the first division. The argument put forward in recent cases by the Government that political propaganda should not be allowed to be carried on in prison and, therefore, that the second division should be enforced seems to me an unwise one and one which has defeated its own end. The Government cannot stop the advertisement, and would do better in its own interests to give it full scope by allowing all the privileges accorded to first division prisoners. The public would not for more than a very short time interest itself in letters or interviews written in prison unless, indeed, the political grievance was a just one, in which case it ought to be attended to and remedied. The Government has no right to order the seclusion of the second division merely to save itself from inconvenience.

As to more serious political cases which amount to crime, assassination, armed assault and the rest, they need not be considered here. The magistrate would refer the accused to the Assizes as untried prisoners. I am of opinion all the same that the nature of the sentences imposed requires special legislation. The Government has every right to inflict death on political assassins or to detain them for life or for shorter periods in prison so as to prevent a recurrence of their acts, but not, I think, to confound them with ordinary criminals under penal servitude. They should be confined as State prisoners or prisoners of war under special conditions not personally degrading.

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There remains the question of how to treat those prisoners who for political or other reasons refuse to conform to prison rules with the mass of prisoners. Under the reformatory system I have proposed it would, I think, be found that refusals would seldom occur and, if they did, that they could be dealt with by deprivation of privileges and relegation to a separate class for punishment. I do not believe in the continuation of the hunger strike to the point of death or permanent injury to health by any but political or religious fanatics. I would, however, risk that, rather than continue the practice of forcible feeding, which is a form of torture no civilised Government has a right to inflict. As applied to political prisoners, it seems to realise the ideal of the mediæval torturers, that of inflicting the maximum of pain without touching any vital organ and with the least risk to life or health. For the case of the Suffragette ladies, I consider that the proper treatment would be to give them the fullest privileges of the first division, with leave to see their friends daily, and to provide their own food and their own medical attendance. If under those circumstances they continued to refuse food the Government would be free of responsibility.

P.S.—I cannot send in this memorandum without adding a word of protest (though it is rather apart from my general subject) against the modern practice of executing prisoners condemned to death within the precincts of our gaols. My experience of a prisoner's feelings after he has been kept for even a short period in the solitary confinement of his cell leads me to be sure that it is a great aggravation to the penalty of death that he should be denied the right, always extended to sentenced men in former times, of dying in the open air and in the presence of his fellow-men. Like many other so-called humanitarian reforms, the abolition of public execution was brought about very much less in the interest of the condemned man than to spare the feelings of those who condemned him, the soft-hearted public which while it consented to his death, was shocked at being forced to see him die. To the man himself, shut in for weeks by the four walls of his prison, with nerves unstrung by solitude and that perpetul longing for a sight of trees and fields and contact

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once more with the busy life he formerly enjoyed, it must surely have lessened by a great deal the pang of death to be set for one last half-hour in the light of day outside those walls, and thus get a breath of the open air of heaven and with it the courage to endure his pain, even were it in the presence of an angry mob rejoicing to see him hanged. The thought of this was constantly with me in prison, and the horror which must come on a poor soul led out one morning from his cell to the gloomy prison yard and there without that small indulgence strangled secretly by those in charge of him. It is not through inhumanity that these hideous new incidents of prison life and prison death have been devised, but through lack of imagination; and I have sometimes thought that before power should be given to any man to condemn his fellow-men to long punishment in gaol he should have served his own personal month to teach him what it means.

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The Month

THE failure—collapse is the truer description—of the grand clerical demonstration at San Sebastien on August 7 is an event which at once closes and begins an epoch in the Catholic history of Spain; ending what may be called the Godoy era of *mañana* politics. It was to have been an "historic protestation" trimmed with the sacerdotal pomp of Roman Catholic ceremony, a demonstration of loyalty to the Vatican and of obedience to the priesthood which should take rank as an "act of unprecedented importance" in Spain and in the history of the Basques. All the mountaineers of the Basque provinces had been mustered in the cause of the remonstrance which was to show the Government that there was still a power in the land greater than that of the King and the Government and authority together, which was the moral force of Rome.

BUT if these are not heroic times, they certainly are not the days of religious warfare. As a fact, the fashionable folk at San Sebastien never passed a quieter Sunday. Instead of a "pacific promenade" lighting the torch of Torquemada in the country, people bathed, sunned themselves on the sands, and pretty women sat under large picture hats and parasols saying the usual pretty things. No heads, no windows, no illusions were broken. The central Junta wisely "postponed" the action; the sister Juntas followed suit. Not even in the Basque provinces, the stronghold of Catholicism, was there the least disposition among the peasantry to offer active or passive resistance, though the pelota-player tells you mournfully that the Government has the "devil's own kink" in its composition and the priests talk generally about Señor Canalejas much as the Breton peasantry spoke at the time of the laïcization policy of the French Government.

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It is an event, none the less, of European interest and is another sign how rapidly the Latin races are "waking up." In Spain, the process of rejuvenation, dating from the destruction of the Armada by the Americans and the loss of the Spanish colonies, may be said to have culminated in this trial of strength between the temporal and spiritual powers that be on an issue which has ruled and misruled Spain since the days of the Inquisitorial bonfires. With the defeat of the Spanish Navy, the sway of Philip II., of Godoy over the people, came to an end. For the first time the Spaniard began to think for himself, to inquire into the reasons of things, to look round with curiosity (instead of the traditional Spanish contempt—*antipatia*) upon the methods of foreign peoples and the causes that have enabled them to endure. A movement sprung up against the bull-fight. Men began to consider how it was that Rome had not assisted them to defeat Mr. Roosevelt and his American rough-riders; why the Spanish ships were all obsolescent whereas the non-Catholic American ships were so effective; in fine, the Spaniards began to read *Don Quixote* over again and found in those magic pages a philosophy of life and economy hitherto unsuspected.

And so while the world was saying *infelix España*, the young Spaniard began to think. A single decade has sufficed to generate a new spirit into the nation. The general feelings of doubt and discontent, always the root beginnings of endeavour, which followed on the war, stimulated a desire for the foundation of progress and prosperity which till then the Spaniard had nobly regarded as the foibles of foreigners; for a new appraisement of the proportional values of Religion and politics, politics and economics, and for a more scientific application to fact as distinct from fatalism, and the advantages of business considerations. It created Socialism linked with Anarchism, a form of argument appealing temperamentally to the Spaniard; it created Rationalism as the natural antipode to an all-domineering Catholicism in a country where Protestantism has never thrived, and extremes are inevitable as droughts. Politics, the kind of lip-politics

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that used to be discussed by the hour at every *café* and barber's shop, ceased to interest men as such so that the barbers had to "get up" economics. Socialists began to teach the doctrine that religion is every man's private affair and no concern of the State whatever. "Emancipation from Rome" became an insidious and subterranean catchword. The students, hitherto lawless in all matters not affecting the Church, grew lawless in all things that were infallible, including the "three P's," the Pope, the Pyx, and the Virgin of Pillar. During the last five years, Rationalism has become a cult and the mark of a caballero's intellect. Even women joined the movement, unfortunately discarding at the same time their mantillas. And when the crisis came the other day the Church found that the mass of the people, which ever since the days of Cervantes it has regarded as the prop and stay of Catholicism, has not the slightest interest in fighting for a cause that young Spain has decreed to be of secondary principle and importance.

THAT is the situation and the policy is none other than the laïcization of Catholic Spain. It has come about, unknown to the outer world, quietly and so rapidly that the Church and probably the Vatican have completely underestimated its force, its reason, its purpose. After the signal failure of that August Sunday there can be no longer question of the force of the Government which has the full power of the Army behind it. But the real reason for this Spanish agnosticism or free-thinking movement is economic. It is not, strictly speaking, a religious movement in the sense of a struggle of one faith against another, for the opponents of the Vatican are avowed free-thinkers acknowledging neither belief nor Pope nor deity, united with but one bond, which is to destroy the power of Rome in the Peninsula, or in plain words to disestablish a Church which they have come to regard as harmful to the true interests of the country.

WERE it a purely religious struggle, the compact masses of Catholicism would still, no doubt, prove too strong for the

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reforming ambition of young Spain; but in its origins and native power it is essentially economic. That is where the Church has failed to grasp the situation, as it is precisely on these lines that the Rationalist Government is framing its policy. The soul, as it is in many ways the beauty, of Spain is its poverty—and the nobility of the people who endure it. All the wealth of the country has gone into the "big stomach" of the Church. Since the war, men have looked with growing displeasure upon the £1,600,000 a year voted to the clergy; upon the unreasonable number of bishops and archbishops, canons and minor dignitaries who swell the clerical list with their privileges and perquisites, their exemption from taxation, while all their splendid properties are free from rates and contributions of any kind. This is where the economic screw pinches. Whole industries have disappeared, passing into the hands of the rich inmates of the convents, who, themselves in a privileged position, have become traders and sellers in the market. If the women of Spain feel the acute competition of their convent sisters, the men suffer equally from the monks who have thus acquired practically a monopoly in professional education, for their colleges pay no taxes and on all occasions they are helped and encouraged. That is why education in Spain is so miserably bad; why it is that the majority of Spanish ladies cannot pen the simplest letter without gross blunders in spelling, grammar and punctuation; why the great majority of the people are as illiterate as the Russian moujik; why the man who wishes to be a teacher is in the power of the clerical faculty who enjoy the same position as the priests or teachers in Mussulman countries.

It is thus a poor man's revolt and it is led and governed by Socialism. It is the revolt of the reforming laity. What the end will be it would be idle to guess at, but that the unfettered sway of the Church in Spain is at an end may be regarded as certain. The clergy cannot dispute the economic side of the question. Their methods of combating the new ideas and movements have been foolish and inquisitorial. The shooting

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of Ferrer was one of those mistakes that change history; it gave the Rationalists and Socialists a fighting cause; it brought the instinct of blood and revenge into the fray; it gave the Government the necessary power to push home their destructive policy. Unbiased opinion in Spain regards the situation with pious equanimity. There may be outrages, even local massacres, bombs, murders—no doubt there will be; but one must remember that perforce the Monarchy is involved and with the Monarchy is involved the Army, which is the instrument of Señor Canalejas as against Catholicism and the masses of reaction. But the Spaniard is a far better educated man to-day than he was before the American War. The young and thinking forces of Spain are with the Socialists, with the Government, with the Rationalist anticlerical movement, and behind them all is poverty. This is the secret young Spain has found out at the price of the loss of her Empire. That is why the operations in Morocco were so unpopular. Spain has, in fact, a new face and heart. And it is because the Church has not advanced with the spirit of the times that its supremacy in the Peninsula would seem doomed to the decay which overtakes senility.

The rise of a democratic free-thinking Spain stands in strange contrast to the loyal celebrations of the eightieth birthday of the Emperor Francis Joseph, *doyen* of crowned heads in Europe, who ascended the throne in the revolutionary year 1848. In private life the type of the *guter Kerl* beloved by Austrians, the Emperor has stood for all the best traditions of kingship during a reign of unprecedented racial, religious, political and economic troubles, by his personality and wise rule alone, it may be said, warding off the many crises which have threatened to plunge the Empire into chaos, and even divide it. *Divide et impera* has been the venerable Monarch's devise. Assuredly to him are due the thanks of Europe. The qualities that have endeared him to his subjects are those chiefly of an unerring common sense. He has always lived the life of an Austrian nobleman, moving about freely among his people, and the stories

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of his natural *bonhomie* are legion. For the last two decades he has stood as the pillar of peace in Europe, for the spirit of *Ausgleich* within his own dominions, holding successfully in the balance, now the Magyars, now the Czechs, now the other discordant elements, while without his very name has become a synonym for peace, so that as long as he continued to wear the Crown, men knew that Austria was a friend.

And so it has proved. Meantime Austria, too, has been advancing steadily and systematically on the lines of German military power. Her army now is admitted to be an exceedingly fine arm; she has gone in for "Dreadnoughts"; welded firmly to the German Empire, the fortunes of the two great German-speaking nations are now politically and militarily one. That is the great new force in European politics, and it has come about, precisely as years ago intelligent observers predicted, through the Pan-German ethnic landslide towards the southern seas. In 1907, Prince Bülow openly admitted that the Triple Alliance had become a torso of which the Italian portion was the wooden leg. All this has changed, so far as Germany and Austria are concerned. Austrian fatalism has been justified. Neither the *Los von Rom* agitation, the Czech schisms, nor the Magyar disunionism have brought about the great race struggle prophesied. To-day the "House of Austria," which till quite recently French publicists were writing of as a "European interest sufficient to justify its maintenance as a whole by force," stands in power and dignity a consolidated whole; a sister arm of the German Empire, no longer a mere geographical house of cards, but strong, eager, conscious of a fresh youth and ambition.

The eightieth birthday of the Emperor Francis Joseph brings this home to Europe. We saw only the other day the Austrian Government deliberately breaking the Treaty of Berlin, supported by the whole weight of Berlin diplomacy. The old "corner-stone" of Europe will vanish with the departure of the

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present Emperor, and in his place there will stand the present Archduke Ferdinand, a devout Catholic, young and full of the desire of achievement, who most certainly will not assume the passive *rôle* that has characterised the long and wise reign of the Emperor Francis Joseph. The question of *Deutschtum* or Germanism is still the ethnic problem of the Austrian Empire and will continue to be so, but far less so than seemed possible but a few years ago, There is Germany's way to the East and to the Mediterranean Sea. There is the mouth of the Danube —the main artery of Austria—which lies in alien hands, as the mouth of the Rhine is held by Holland. That, apart from the racial and linguistic ties, is the great economic bond between Germany and Austria, which unites them against the Slav mirage within and without. And now that Austria is building "Dreadnoughts" it may be assumed that the *Drang* or gravitation policy towards the sea has entered into the phase of potential realisation.

THE whole policy of Austria tends to work, in Bismarck's words, "for the King of Prussia," as the almost inevitable result of the loosening of the Italian body from the Triple Alliance and, in part, to the so-called "isolation" policy of England, which at one time threatened to detach Austria from Germany. The reawakening of Austria has quite changed that. The advent of the energetic Baron Aerenthal to power, the silent power of the Archduke Ferdinand, have tended to modify the existing recipe for governing Austria, which ever since the days of Taafe has consisted in the policy of keeping all the different elements permanently discontented. The break of German diplomacy with the traditional reinsurance policy with Russia was a very symptomatic sign of the joint working of the two German-speaking Powers, as is the now settled determination of Austria to build a small but first-class fighting fleet; in which connection the meeting of the Emperor William II. with the Tsar is not without due importance. More and more, economic union between Germany and the Austrian Empire is seen to be the great solution; and there can be little doubt but that the policy of Austria

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will be framed more in accordance with the views of the Wilhelmstrasse than has been the case in the past. That being so, the new national movement in Austria is a matter of very real interest to Europe. Unity and the co-operation of all the German tribes has always been the motto of the Emperor William II. Though it is not likely, as Pan-Germans once insisted, that out of the German Emperor an Emperor of "all the Germans" will arise, the cause of Germany and Austria must be viewed from the standpoint of common interest and affinity.

At home, the great question for England remains the Navy. There are two pieces of news that call for attention; one being the announcement by Count Reventlow that the sale of German ships to Turkey will accelerate the speed of the new "Dreadnoughts" at the rate of one per annum, thereby considerably augmenting the programme; the other is a statement recently made by Mr. Elmer Roberts (chief correspondent of the Associated Press in Berlin, where he has a quite unprecedented and semi-official position) in *Scribner's Magazine* to the effect that the ratio aimed at by Germany is three to two as soon as possible instead of the seven to one at the date of the Kruger telegram. Both those announcements are interesting. A margin of three to two in our favour, without counting the Austrian ships, would jeopardise the national safety and absolutely necessitate the creation of a conscriptionist Army. That Mr. Elmer Roberts spoke with full knowledge of the facts as to the aim of German policy is a certainty; that he did so with permission of the German Foreign Office is equally certain. That is the ratio of the fighting chance that German policy is building up to. It can only be repeated that this is not a party question. We view it solely upon the facts as they stand. We would ask only that the Liberal party should accept the facts laid before the country by Mr. Asquith and believe in our absolute and non-party honesty in this vital national concern.

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THE MONTH

The deaths of Lord Spencer and of Florence Nightingale have removed two figures who in their respective spheres stood for all that is highest and best in man and woman. As one of the last of the great Whig families, Lord Spencer leaves behind him a public record of duty and worth that friend and foe have alike done honour to. Florence Nightingale belongs to the immortal gallery of noble women, great for all time in her sex and sympathy. Her name will ever be associated with England. They both lived to a ripe old age, and they have gone at the dawn of a new era, that of science and democracy, an era that has need of their fine example.

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The Problem of Unemployment in Germany

By Dr. Otto Most

[Note.—Dr. Otto Most, Director—since 1902—of the Statistical Bureau of the City of Düsseldorf (one of the first of the statistical offices of the Empire) and Chief of the Department for providing occupation for the unemployed in that municipality, is now regarded by German statisticians as perhaps the leading authority on the whole subject of unemployment in Germany. He is one of the official representatives of Germany at the Congress to be held in Paris this month for the consideration of remedies against unemployment.—The Editor.]

Unemployment is to-day a burning question in all countries with a highly developed trade. The remarks made by the British Premier on the subject in December 1908, when he (in effect) characterised as a shame and a scandal for the British Legislature and the Administration that it should have constantly to deal with the distress caused by unemployment, and never otherwise than by haphazard palliatives, applies to almost all the civilised countries of the world. This is manifest from the fact that all the leading nations are now preparing to send representatives to the International Congress on the subject, which is to be held in Paris this month. The complaints against the distress are no more general than those as to the difficulty of finding a remedy. As a matter of fact, nothing of a really effective character in that direction has yet been achieved in the way of legislation.

In England, the Liberal Government has undertaken the solution of this problem later than many other States, but, on the other hand, it has laid down the basis of a large and harmonious programme covering the whole field. It seeks to remedy the evils occasioned by unemployment among the masses by direct and indirect, by repressive and preventive, methods,

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all of which are regarded from a purely economic standpoint. While, as a foreigner, I do not propose to criticise the project of the English Government, I am very pleased to accept the invitation to lay before the British public a connected statement of the problem as it exists in Germany, all the more as I have been given to understand by numerous English friends who have visited me in Düsseldorf that information on the subject would be very welcome in England. The causes and character of unemployment in England and Germany are very similar, but the methods of dealing with them show considerable differences. In Germany, the home of Municipal and State Socialism, the problem has thus far been left to the municipalities and to private initiative, while in England under the new project it is, in the main, being kept in the hands of the State.

I

Unemployment is a problem which affects all classes, yet all forms of unemployment, however painful their effects may be for the individual, cannot be regarded, from an economic standpoint, as regrettable and calling for a remedy. On the contrary, in the labour market, as in all others, a certain excess of supply over demand must be constantly present if business is not to stagnate. A certain number of unemployed, a reserve of labour, is an absolutely indispensable condition of economic progress. At normal times this proportion, though naturally very different in the different branches, is on an average about 1 per cent. of the capable workers in summer, and 3 per cent. in winter. While this proportion sinks in periods of flourishing trade, it increases in times of depression to such a point as to lead to a condition of distress among the working classes that might easily extend to the whole community. As in the fixing of rent a certain sum is always allowed for the risk of houses remaining empty for a time, so in the fixing of wages a certain excess is paid for probable unemployment, as is seen in the considerably higher wages paid to season workers such as masons, &c., as compared to those whose work continues throughout the whole year. That the season workers, at least in Germany,

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have in most cases not yet learnt to lay by something for the regularly recurring unemployment from which they suffer is one of the evils that have yet to be dealt with by labour organisations in the way of social education. Thus, unemployment only becomes a problem that interests the whole community when it arises from the causes with which I shall deal later on, and exceeds the normal proportion; and when, consequently, it affects not only those who immediately suffer therefrom, but the entire community.

It is necessary to remember this in order to keep within due bounds certain excessive demands in the direction of social reform. It is impossible to deny, however, that an abnormal condition of excessive unemployment has prevailed during the last decade with constantly increasing frequency, particularly in highly developed industrial countries like England and Germany. It is this fact which has led politicians of all parties to take up the question of remedies for unemployment.

II

Unemployment due to lack of work arising from economic causes is the one form of unemployment dealt with here. That arising from physical incapacity, from moral incapacity, and from military service, which withdraws capable workers from the labour market, is excluded from consideration. The three latter categories of unemployment, although not forming part of the purely economic problem, are yet of importance owing to their effects upon the German labour market. The evils arising from unemployment through physical incapacity are mitigated through poor-relief and through the system of social insurance against illness and accident provided by the German Empire. In periods of economic depression there is a general tendency among semi-invalids and persons in chronic low health, who in good times are able to earn a living, to call upon these funds. Unemployment from moral causes includes those who will not work and strikers who temporarily refuse to work owing to differences with their employers. It may be fairly estimated on the basis of statistics published by

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some of the Federal States, such as Bavaria, that in Germany, in a thoroughly normal condition of the labour market, there is annually no less than a quarter of a million of condemnations for vagabondage, &c., under paragraphs 361 and 362 of the Criminal Code. Considerable as is the loss of national property occasioned by this refusal to work, it is far exceeded by that occasioned through strikes and lock-outs. Still greater, however, is the influence of military service on the existence and extent of unemployment. The German army is composed of about 120,000 professional soldiers—officers and non-commissioned officers—and 500,000 privates, that is to say, persons temporarily withdrawn from their civil employments. Of the latter number, over 200,000 come from the working classes. Thus the supply in the labour market is constantly reduced by this 200,000. If these soldiers, together with some 200,000 other possible workers detained in German prisons, were thrown on the labour market at the date of the census in December 1895, the number of the unemployed would be very nearly double, rising from 3½ per cent. of the entire working classes to over 6 per cent.

III

The tendency to error in the measures taken for dealing with the problem of unemployment will be all the less if the actual facts to be dealt with are fully established by trustworthy statistics. Consequently the question of the value of unemployment statistics in general, and of those taken up to the present in particular, call for special attention, all the more as, in spite of the extraordinary wealth of publications, there has practically been thus far no really expert criticism on the subject. It is impossible to exaggerate the value of the statistics of unemployment which constitutes the first condition for the development of a scientific view of the task of preventing, remedying, and mitigating that evil. A constant observation of unemployment would be of great assistance in an inquiry into the influence of crises, states of trade, and changes in the economic condition of a country. It would even help to form an opinion of the effects of particular economic measures upon

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the general welfare of the worker and upon the degree in which the working power of the nation was being employed. These statistics constitute an indispensable basis for the development of insurance against unemployment, which must be based, like all other forms of insurance, upon the experience collected by statistics, and must be subjected, as far as possible, to the rules of probability.

Finally, well-organised statistics of unemployment are equally indispensable as a basis for the direct intervention of the authorities, in the form of winter and other relief works, &c. If we lay down as a principle that the public authorities are only called upon to take direct action when exceptional evils exist of a kind that burden the whole community, it necessarily follows that we must provide as trustworthy a standard as possible to show whether this preliminary condition is fulfilled or not.

Unfortunately, there are special difficulties in meeting the demands of statistical science in the collection of unemployment statistics. We must take these into consideration in order to secure a basis from which the reader will be able to judge for himself and to utilise the existing material and that to be collected hereafter, including that of unemployment in England.

The problem of limitation in unemployment statistics has never been successfully solved in any census, notwithstanding the large number of them that have been taken. Even the concept "worker" is difficult to define. A few illustrations will suffice to show the existing confusion. In the census taken by the Berlin Trades Union in 1900, the largest private undertaking of this kind, the inquiry made was simply for "persons out of employment." The consequence was that a large number of small shop-people, artisans working on their own account, and innkeepers identified themselves with the other unemployed and were included in the statistics, thus increasing their numbers in an unjustifiable way. In like manner the imperial census of 1895 included all persons out of employment "who did not belong to the groups of independent persons and persons drawing salaries." The numerous municipal censuses usually demand among their questions more precise particulars of the former employment, but the selection

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of the persons to whom the questions are presented is left to the decision of the collectors, who have no special statistical knowledge. In the regular unemployment statistics of the City of Cologne, for instance, the census-collectors are only shown the route which they are to take for the collection and for the discovery of the workers, including shop assistants, &c., who are involuntarily out of employment.

But even were all these difficulties overcome, another still remains, namely, the impossibility of excluding from the total those who are unemployed for other than economic reasons. Those in prison and in military service are naturally excluded at once ; but difficulties arise even in dealing with those who are unemployed for physical reasons. It is true that one can ask, "Why are you unemployed?" The answer will often be, "Because I am incapable of working," or "Because I am ill." But who can guarantee the accuracy of these replies? Indeed, how is it possible to be sure that those who state they are out of work (a statement made, perhaps, on political grounds) are really unemployed? In Germany, the country of working-class insurance, where every worker who is in employment must have an insurance card, where every one suffering from illness must have a certificate from the doctor of his sick club, and where every person incapable of work draws an allowance, such a control may be exercised, although with great difficulty. But what is to be done in a country where all these arrangements do not exist? Finally, it is in all countries quite impossible to establish statistically the number of those who are unemployed owing to their objection to work, as here we have to deal with purely psychological considerations. This fact constitutes a natural defect of all unemployment statistics, impossible to remedy, and which is particularly calculated to serve as a warning against any overestimate of the results secured. It has, it is true, been contended that the proportion of those unemployed who really do not want to work remains in the main the same, as compared to the total of the unemployed, and therefore does not influence a general comparison, which is the principal point in view. As a matter of fact, however, this is by no means the case, as the number of those who object to work depends partly

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upon very variable conditions, which have often nothing whatever to do with the economic situation.

Whether the demands of completeness, avoidance of double counting, and a suitable system of comparison are fulfilled depends upon one point, namely, whether the statistics are taken as part of a general census comprising the employed members of the same section of the community, or as a special census of the unemployed alone. In my opinion, an unemployment census, when it avoids all the difficulties that I have indicated, can only show comparatively reliable results when it includes a census of all the persons in employment belonging to the same category. It is to-day accepted as a matter of course in making out the statistics of population, that in order to establish the number of the unmarried, not only that class, but also the married and the widowed, must be counted for the purposes of control. Thus, a census of the unemployed alone, whatever district and whatever branch it may deal with, lacks the sole method of control that will prevent the omission of numerous persons and the double counting of others.

There is another, and not less important, reason why the basis of an unemployment statistic should be a general census, that is to say, one that includes every member of the population, or at least that covers all the persons of the particular section of the population for which the census is taken. The object of the census is to establish whether, and in how far, the condition of the labour market is in a normal state. It is impossible to form an opinion upon that point merely on the basis of absolute figures of those out of employment. This can only be acquired when the latter are compared with the total of the working classes, and considered in proportion to the latter. For the practical task of providing a remedy for unemployment, as well as for forming a scientific judgment of the situation, the point is to establish whether the proportion between unemployed and employed is normal, and in what direction it is moving.

We now come to the question as to what has thus far been achieved in Germany in this department. As a warning to all those who are too urgent in their demands for such censuses, without a clear idea of the difficulties in their way, the answer

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is : a great deal so far as quantity is concerned, very little indeed from the point of view of quality. The statistics taken upon a regular census basis have thus far been very few in number in Germany. In 1895 there was one for the whole German Empire, a general occupation (professional and business) census being taken in the summer, while the regular census of the whole population followed in the winter. In both cases the census papers contained questions as to unemployment, its duration, and illness or other causes of incapacity for work. I have already pointed out, however, that the concept " worker " was on this occasion defectively defined. The census, furthermore, suffered from the fact that the length of the period of unemployment was not clearly established. At the same time these two censuses have very considerable importance, as the first account of unemployment throughout Germany on two separate days. Unfortunately, up to the present, after a lapse of fifteen years, they furnish the sole measure for the extent and character of unemployment in the whole empire. The different Federal States, with the sole exception of the small Hansa State of Bremen, which combined statistics of unemployment with its Occupation Census in 1907, has done nothing whatever in this direction. On the other hand, numerous cities have tried in various ways, some with a certain regularity and others occasionally, to secure such information. In the winter of 1908–9 about sixty German municipalities undertook such censuses. These may be classified in three groups according as they were taken : (1) by the so-called indirect method; (2) by the system of voluntary notification; or (3) the system of counting from house to house. The so-called indirect method utilises the annual official particulars secured for the purpose of taxation. The worker who, in reply to the questions put to him, does not give the name of his employer, is asked personally for further particulars. The advantages of this system, first introduced in Dresden in 1902, consist in those of a general census already mentioned, in the reliability of the material, and finally in the possibility of a completely regular repetition upon the same basis. The disadvantages, on the other hand, are the great length of time that elapses between the beginning and the

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completion of the census, and the difficulty of personally questioning each of the unemployed, many of whom may have removed or died, and, finally, in the unfavourable time of the year, October or November, which fails to give the maximum or any other typical degree of unemployment. The two other methods departing from the census basis, and dealing solely with the unemployed themselves, are easier and cheaper, and constitute the great majority. The following facts will enable the reader to form his own opinion of their practical and scientific value.

The system of voluntary notification consisted originally in providing in different parts of the city boxes for the collection of forms which had been previously distributed. In the evening the boxes were emptied, the number of forms filled up being reckoned as equivalent to the number of unemployed. The defects of this extraordinary system, which is still employed in large cities, is obvious. Whoever fails to put a form in the box, whether because he has received none or because he feels no interest in the census, is not counted. On the other hand, persons not out of employment who may choose to utilise the forms have every opportunity of doing so. Furthermore, there is a complete absence of all possibility of correcting false statements. The existence of this possibility at least constitutes the advantage of the system recently introduced in Greater Berlin, in which the unemployed have to report themselves in special census bureaux, which are opened after adequate notice on certain days. In the latter system, however, the principal disadvantage still exists, namely, that there is no obligation to give these particulars, the participation in the census depending exclusively on the interest in it of the unemployed, that is to say, to a great extent upon the agitation that has previously been carried on among them. Thus the census taken in Greater Berlin in November 1908, notwithstanding the fact that it was prepared with the greatest care, was a complete failure, inasmuch as the Social-Democratic trade unions carried on an agitation against it. No more than 40,000 reported themselves, while the census made six weeks later by the trade unions gave over 100,000 unemployed. The second official census in January

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1909 was such a complete failure that it was not thought worth while to work up the results.

There is to-day, on the other hand, a disposition in many quarters to regard the system of counting from house to house as, in the words of the Imperial Statistical Bureau, "theoretically least subject to the risk of error." It cannot be denied that the census taken from house to house is an improvement upon the system of notification. The Imperial Statistical Bureau, however, is perfectly right when it points out that this advantage over the other methods can only continue to exist when those entrusted with the task of collecting the information meet all the necessary requirements in the matter of capacity, energy, and, above all, impartiality. Now experience has shown that the unemployed have only the necessary confidence in census-collectors when the latter belong to their own class, that is to say, when they are drawn from the working-class organisations. The upshot of all this is that in the system of notification everything depends upon the energy and goodwill of the unemployed themselves, and in the house-to-house system upon the energy and goodwill of the census-collectors, that is to say, on the trade-union organisations. The decisive influence exercised by these conditions upon the quality of the census, and its result, is shown clearly in the typical example of Charlottenburg in 1905. Three censuses of the unemployed were organised in that suburb of Berlin with the assistance of the trade unions, and by the distribution of question-cards from house to house. The first census of February 26, 1905, showed 841 unemployed; that of July 23, 278; and that of November 25, 123! Referring to this astonishing decline in the number of the unemployed from summer to autumn, the Charlottenburg monthly Statistical Report says: "The very small number of the unemployed shown by this census is doubtless not to be attributed exclusively to the favourable economic situation, but to a considerable extent to the fact that the trade unions who have undertaken the distribution and collection of the question-cards have this time shown less energy than formerly, having been to a great extent occupied by the municipal elections in November." *Sapienti sat!* Every year a somewhat similar phenomenon is to be

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observed at Cologne, where the full number of the female unemployed is never even approximately reported—the working women having for the trades-union census-takers less interest than the male unemployed, who furnish more satisfactory objects for their agitation. Censuses the success of which depend upon such personal considerations, and the original material of which cannot be adequately checked by the central officers on whose authority the results must be published, the reliability of which varies for reasons entirely beyond the control and judgment of the census-collectors themselves, cannot, of course, be regarded as trustworthy records of facts.

Even if the organisations for taking the census were to work in the best possible way, there would still remain the serious defects of the census itself for the immediate and practical utilisation of the results. During the autumn and winter months the weather causes great changes from day to day in the number of the unemployed, so great indeed that the results of an unemployment census is often no longer a true picture of the situation by the time that the material is counted. This leads to conscious or unconscious abuse in one direction or another.

In this connection it will be of interest to mention the answers as to the result of their experience which I received at the end of 1908 to a question addressed to six municipal administrations who at that time had undertaken a census of the unemployed. One was: "The Municipal Administration is guided solely by the returns of the Labour Exchanges" (notwithstanding the fact that they had taken an unemployed census); others were: "The unemployment census has not shown any important new results"; "The census can make no claim to complete reliability"; "They do not appear to have produced any result that can be utilised in practice." Only two out of the six of the municipalities expressed a somewhat more favourable opinion.

Thus in Germany the unemployment statistics are tolerably bad, and in other civilised States they are no better. Progress can only be attained when two demands are fulfilled, which may be fairly said to call for international application. First, in order to secure a general basis for the knowledge of

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unemployment and for the insurance against it, each census of occupations and general census must be at the same time a census of unemployment. Second, in order to fulfil the practical object of immediate provision for the unemployed, it is necessary to substitute for the dubious occasional censuses already described a careful and constant observation of the labour market, that is to say, first of all the establishment and development of Labour Exchange statistics. To give adequate effect to the requirements of these statistics will be one of the most important and at the same time most difficult tasks of the new Labour Exchanges in England.

IV

Although, as will be seen, the results of the unemployed statistics up to the present can only be used with caution, we are nevertheless obliged to have recourse to them unless we renounce altogether the attempt (based, though it be, merely on a series of instantaneous pictures) to realise the extent of unemployment in Germany. As already stated, the only unemployment statistics for the whole German Empire are those taken in 1895. It is certain that in the fifteen years that have elapsed since then the economic position of Germany has undergone numerous and important changes. These changes, however, are decidedly not of a nature to lessen the proportion of unemployment. Consequently, apart from the natural influence of a growing population, not only the absolute but also the relative figures in 1895 must be regarded as the lowest, and, indeed, as the lowest in a year of fairly good trade. Keeping these considerations in mind, it is possible to utilise the results given by those censuses, which were as follows :

	June 18, 1895		Dec. 2, 1895
Total number of unemployed . . .	299,352	..	771,005
Of this number, unemployed owing to illness.	120,348	..	217,365
Unemployed on other grounds . . .	179,004	..	553,640

As these figures do not include soldiers and prisoners, the third row of figures shows those who were unemployed on economic and moral grounds. The fact that it is practically impossible

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to distinguish those unemployed purely on economic grounds has already been shown. Consequently in the following remarks those unemployed of both kinds who are capable of work are taken together and referred to simply as the "unemployed." According to these statistics there were, therefore, in Germany in the summer of 1895, in round numbers, one-fifth of a million, and in the winter of that year considerably more than half a million unemployed. If to the latter figure were added the families of the unemployed, one would be entitled to say that on December 2, 1895, about one and a half million persons suffered directly from unemployment.

In proportion to the total number of the working class, the unemployed amounted to 1.11 per cent. in summer and 3.43 per cent. in winter. In both cases the proportion of male workers unemployed was 1.26 and 3.79 per cent. higher than among the females unemployed (0.83 and 2.74 per cent.). The absolute numbers of the unemployed in the winter of 1895 were 400,017 males and 153,623 females.

The unemployment in winter was more than three times as great as in summer, apart from the fact that it is in winter easier to include in the statistics those tramps who in summer sleep in the open air, and thus escape the, to them, disagreeable necessity of being counted. This difference is explained by the circumstance that in winter many branches of industry, such as agriculture and seasonal trades, come to a standstill. Thus we find that of the physically capable unemployed the following numbers were contributed by :

	June 1895	Dec. 1895
Agriculture and gardening	18,442 ..	158,340
The stone, clay and brick-making industry .	3,058 ..	20,615
The building trade	19,408 ..	145,121
Transport, including shipping and the conduct of rafts	4,163 ..	11,603
The lodging-house and refreshment industry, including baths and summer resorts . .	5,948 ..	11,838

No fewer than 347,517 of the unemployed in winter belong to these five sections of the working population, that is to say, nearly two-thirds of the total number and 296,498 more than in summer. This accounts for over three-fourths (79 per cent.)

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of the difference of 374,636 which exists between the total of the physically capable unemployed in summer and winter throughout the Empire. Setting agriculture aside, the total of the unemployed in winter in industry, trade and transport, about two-fifths come from the four remaining categories of season-workers just mentioned. The establishment of this decisive influence of the season trades on unemployment in winter is all the more important as the unemployment of the workers engaged in those trades is nothing extraordinary, but on the contrary a normal phenomenon. The remedy should be found in correspondingly higher wages during the working season.

The composition of the total of the unemployed and the degree in which the different occupations are represented, as well as different variations according to the time of the year, appear very clearly in Table A (p. 356).

The details of this survey deserve careful study. There is one point to which attention should be called, namely, that here, too, the majority of the unemployed in winter belong to the two groups of agriculture (No. 1) and the building trade (No. 15). Both furnish, out of 479,091 unemployed in agriculture, industry, trade, and transport, 303,461, that is to say, 63.3 per cent. of the total, while the remaining twenty groups (2–14, 16–22) make up between them only 36.7 per cent. In these two groups also, the difference between the unemployment in summer and winter is the greatest; as will be seen from the table, for every 100 unemployed in agriculture in June there were 858.58 in December, and in the building trade for every 100 unemployed in June there were 747.74 in December. On the other hand, the large industries of Germany, such as the mining, metal, machine, tool, chemical, and textile industries showed the lowest percentage of unemployed, both in summer and winter. The continuity of employment is rendered possible in these industries by their business organisation, and appears to be particularly desired on economic grounds. With the exception of the branches already mentioned, the contrary is the case in all occupations in which unskilled labour preponderates. The condition of the typical

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TABLE A

	Absolute numbers unemployed.		Percentage of the unemployed compared to the total number of the workers.		For every 100 unemployed in June there were in Dec. 1895
	June 1895.	Dec. 1895.	June 1895.	Dec. 1895.	
(*a*) *Agriculture and forestry* . .	19,204	162,472	0.33	2.81	846.03
Of these: (1) Agriculture . .	18,442	158,340	0.33	2.82	858.58
(2) Forestry and fishing . .	762	4,132	0.65	3.54	542.26
(*b*) *Mining and industry* . .	97,782	274,625	1.53	4.18	280.85
(3) Mining and metal works .	2,622	3,422	0.46	0.61	130.51
(4) Stone and clay industry .	3,058	20,615	6.65	4.40	674.13
(5) Metal industry . . .	12,719	16,098	1.77	2.24	126.57
(6) Machine industry . .	4,627	6,273	1.52	2.06	135.57
(7) Chemical industry . .	900	1,056	0.97	1.14	117.33
(8) Secondary products of forestry	403	494	1.06	1.30	112.58
(9) Textile industry . . .	6,537	7,723	0.74	0.88	118.14
(10) Paper industry . . .	1,775	1,773	1.46	1.46	99.89
(11) Leather-using industries .	2,855	5,322	2.30	4.29	186.81
(12) Timber-using industries .	8,068	11,033	1.77	2.42	136.75
(13) Provision and liquor trades .	14,304	18,946	2.18	2.88	132.45
(14) Clotting and cleaning industries	16,466	27,982	2.12	3.61	169.94
(15) Building trade . . .	19,408	145,121	1.68	12.60	774.74
(16) Industry of engraving and reproductions . .	2,847	2,864	2.67	2.69	100.60
(17) Artists and applied art works	466	712	2.48	3.79	152.79
(18) Persons not otherwise described	727	5,191	2.55	18.19	714.03
(*c*) *Trade and transport* . . .	26,180	41,994	1.75	2.78	160.40
Of these: (19) Trade . .	15,866	18,326	2.53	2.92	115.50
(20) Insurance	203	227	1.11	1.25	111.82
(21) Transport . . .	4,163	11,603	9.78	2.18	278.72
(22) Lodgings and refreshments .	5,948	11,838	1.88	2.73	119.02
(*d*) *Household service, day labour of various kinds* . . .	30,907	68,423	1.74	3.82	221.38
(*e*) *Public service and the professions.*	4,931	6,126	0.76	0.93	124.23
Totals	179,004	553,640	1.11	3.40	309.29

occupations employing unskilled labour is shown in Table B (p. 357).

In the latter case, therefore, we find the proportion of unemployment, even in times of fairly good trade, more than

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TABLE B

	Total of unemployed.		Per cent. of unemployed as compared to the total number of workers.	
	June 1895.	Dec. 1895.	June 1895.	Dec. 1895.
Factory hands, workmen, and assistants not otherwise described .	727	5,191	2.55	18.19
Day labour of different kinds .	11,797	41,849	5.87	20.83
Total	12,524	47,040	8.42	39.02

TABLE C

Town.	Date of census.	Number of unemployed after deducting those incapable of work from illness or other causes.	
		Total number.	Percentage of the working classes.
Berlin	18.11.1908	28,006	5.1
Bochum	31.3.1909	420	1.4
Brunswick	20.1.1909	575	1.8
Charlottenburg	18.11.1908	1,948	2.5
Chemnitz	15.1.1909	1,862	2.4
Cologne	24.1.1909	3,478	3.4
Dortmund	28.2.1909	1,078	2.1
Dresden	28.11.1908	5,004	4.2
Elberfeld	14.2.1908	703	1.7
Halle-on-the-Saal . . .	15.10.1908	2,917	7.8
Kiel	13.12.1908	1,960	5.3
Magdeburg	29.11.1908	2,208	3.9
Mannheim	1.2.1909	1,511	3.4
Nuremberg	10.12.1908	2,513	2.7
Rixdorf	18.11.1908	3,681	7.2
Schoeneberg	14.2.1909	2,659	10.2
Stuttgart	17.11.1908	1,001	1.6
Wiesbaden	3.11.1908	596	2.8

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one-fifth of the total number. What must it be in periods of depression? In this group, as also under the general heading "Building trade," the navvies furnish a large contingent, the exact number of which it is impossible to ascertain.*

As already set forth in the third section of this article, the only new material is that furnished by a number of large towns. If we overlook the defects of this material, we find that the winter which shows the greatest degree of unemployment was that of 1908–9.

The foregoing statistics are here reproduced (Table C, p. 357) because they help indirectly to give an approximately just idea of the extent of unemployment in the German Empire, although all the figures upon which they are based may not be invariably accurate. The eighteen towns above mentioned have together a total of 62,120 unemployed, which is equal to an average of 4.1 per cent. of the working classes resident in them. It is notorious, however, that this figure is very considerably less than the reality, and according to careful estimates must be increased by about one-half, so that the average of these towns would in reality be about 6 per cent.

* The fact that the unskilled labourers form the majority among the unemployed is manifest from the following table, showing the occupations of those who applied for work on the Relief Works at Düsseldorf, a town of highly developed industry, in four winters :

	1901–2.		1902–3.		1907–8.		1908–9.	
	Total No.	Percentage.	Total No.	Percentage.	Total No.	Percentage.	Total No.	Percentage.
Unskilled labourers.	1312	75.0	818	77.1	1426	62.7	1820	62.9
Metal-workers .	194	11.1	102	9.6	173	7.7	319	11.0
Carpenters .	13	0.7	28	2.6	60	2.6	85	2.9
Mason's assistants	131	7.5	68	6.4	468	20.6	470	16.2
Other skilled labourers . .	57	3.3	45	4.8	135	5.9	191	6.6
All skilled labourers	395	22.6	243	22.9	836	36.8	1065	36.7
Shopmen, clerks, &c.	43	2.4	—	—	11	0.5	12	0.4
Total . .	1750	100	1061	100	2273	100	2897	100

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If these figures are regarded as typical for the large towns of Germany, and if it be further assumed that unemployment in the large cities is to-day greater in about the same proportion as it was fifteen years ago, than throughout the rest of the country—two assumptions against which no valid objection can be raised—the following calculation may be made: as unemployment in the towns with a population of over 100,000 persons was, in the winter of 1895, nearly exactly one-half as great again as in the rest of the country (4.9 per cent. of the working classes as against 3.3 per cent.), and furthermore, according to the Census of Occupations in 1907, 3,000,000 workers lived in the smaller towns and the country as against 15,000,000 in the large towns, the number of the physically capable unemployed throughout the whole German Empire in the autumn of 1908 was 780,000, or, including the members of their families, the total number of those who suffered directly from unemployment may be assumed to be 2,500,000, that is, about 4 per cent. of the total population—a very considerable average.

V

The growing danger of unemployment in Germany, as elsewhere, is in the main due to the process of industrialisation, which has become more or less manifest in all civilised States within the last few decades. It is true that agriculture as a seasonal trade suffers from unemployment in the winter, but this is far less than in industry. Moreover, for several months in the summer the agricultural labourer has practically no experience of unemployment. According to the table already given in Section IV. of this article, the proportion of unemployed in the summer of 1895 was 0.33 per cent. in agriculture, and in winter 2.81 per cent.; while in mining and industry the proportion for the summer was 1.53 per cent., and in winter 4.18. The manner in which the position of agriculture in the total economic structure of Germany is constantly declining in comparison with trade and industry is shown by the fact that of every 100 inhabitants of the German Empire 42.51 belonged to the agricultural classes in 1882; in 1895 this proportion had fallen to 35.24, and

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in 1907 to 28.65. Thus the industrialisation of the Empire and the increasing danger of unemployment go hand in hand. This sacrifice is made by Germany, as well as by England and other leading nations, on the altar of economic development. Is it desirable, on account of that sacrifice, to check this tendency? Does this disadvantage justify the advocates of Protection on both sides of the North Sea in opposing the free highway required for universal commerce by a tariff wall protecting national production? It is true that a people which shuts itself off economically from the outer world suffers only from its own evils. It remains more or less unaffected by the crises that cross the ocean. It leads a more easy-going, but at the same time a more paltry and hand-to-mouth existence. Notwithstanding the fact that to-day unemployment is more frequent and extensive than in former times, yet the level of civilisation of the German working man has steadily risen, while even Social-Democratic writers admit that his standard of living is visibly improving. Indeed the income-tax returns and the deposits in the savings banks bear witness to economic progress precisely of that section of the working classes engaged in industry. The risk of unemployment is thus more than compensated for by the possibility of higher wages. In the long run the result will not depend upon the temporary damage done by unemployment to individuals, but whether this injury is permanently greater than the advantage which arises from the industrialisation of the country, and from the share which it takes in the trade and commerce of the world. It is, of course, now out of the question to think of shutting off Germany from her participation in that trade and commerce. It is only necessary to compare the Germany and the Germans of fifty years ago with those of to-day to show that a change in that direction is inconceivable. Therefore the remedy for the temporary evils of industrialisation in Germany is to be sought in some other direction than in hampering its industrial and commercial progress. These remedies will be dealt with in a second article.

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Agricultural Contrasts

By F. E. Green

> The grace of the battle for food,
> With the issue Earth cannot refuse
> When men to their labour are sworn.
>
> George Meredith.

More than a year had gone by since the Small Holdings Act of 1907 had become law when I attended a drawing-room meeting to listen to a speech by the President of the Board of Agriculture. A purr of satisfaction accompanied my lord's speech, and my patience had wellnigh exhausted itself over the futility of the uninformed optimism I listened to, when a voice and form arrested my vagrant attention. It was Sir Horace Plunkett, the creator—and until quite recently the Chief of the Department of Agriculture for Ireland—who had risen to speak.

"I am afraid," he said in that half-wistful, half-cynical manner of his, "that I have learned nothing new to take back to my countrymen—excepting one thing. The noble Earl has told us how the passing of the Small Holdings Act is likely to have the effect of cheapening rides to the races at Newmarket by providing grass land for the horses of job-masters. That alone, my lord, ladies, and gentlemen, would be enough to make the Small Holdings Act a measure of great popularity among my fellow-countrymen. . . ."

As I left the meeting I could not help contrasting the English with the Irish policy; the English Board with the Irish Department. At that time I was not as intimate with the workings of the Department of Agriculture for Ireland as I am now; but I knew enough to realise how ineffectual our own Board appeared to be in the recolonisation of rural England compared to that of the Irish Department. In England we had produced a great deal of talk, many columns of newspaper articles and thousands

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of pamphlets dealing with the subject; but next to nothing had been *done*. Indeed, we seemed to have given ourselves over entirely to the indulgence of that wearisome weakness with which we have commonly accused the Irish—ceaseless talking. In Ireland, however, there had been action, and vigorous action, taking place for the last seven years.

In England we had for the President of the Board of Agriculture one who, as a landowner, had won the admiration of all classes. Had he not divided his land into small holdings? Was he not gifted with a large public spirit and personal sincerity? Yet he made the fatal mistake of believing in the good intentions of those who controlled our County Councils. In local self-government nothing showed the contrast between England and Ireland more markedly than the composition of the County Councils. In Ireland the County Councils are largely composed of small holders. In England they are almost entirely composed of the landowning class, or of a class that lives on the earnings of others. Lord Carrington had been warned again and again that many of the County Councils were not doing their duty—were not, indeed, attempting to find land for suitable applicants for small holdings; and that the appeal to the higher authority, to those two High Commissioners who were to assert themselves as a driving force, had as yet proved of no avail. Yet he apparently still continued to believe the good intentions of the obdurate County Councils and in the sympathetic administration of his own Board.

Here we get a striking contrast between the bureaucratically governed Board at Whitehall and the democratically controlled Department at Dublin. The Irish Department is controlled by a Council of Agriculture whose members are elected by each County Council with the addition of co-opted members. In Ireland, therefore, there is a Council of Agriculture which is composed largely of men who have lived amid wretchedness, who have looked into wolf-like eyes of poverty, and have heard the compelling cry of the Earth—of men who were cognisant of the daily wants of the people. Every official I met with in Ireland under this Council worked with an enthusiasm such

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as one could only expect from those who are taking part in the creation of some Utopia.

At Whitehall, on the contrary, an Olympian aloofness from anything related to the spirit of Earth Hunger dominates that bureaucratic Board. It is doubtful if there is a single member of it in touch with the common wants and the difficulties which beset the path of our country labourers. It was said that when we had a Liberal Government installed at Westminster we should have a democratic administration at Whitehall. Lord Carrington, we heard, was not a man to be thwarted. He would see that the land of England should be used by those who would till it with profit to themselves and to the nation at large. Had he not already shown an earnest of this in the administration of his own estates? Had not two High Commissioners been especially appointed to bring to book recalcitrant County Councils, and would not these two High Commissioners be men who would readily listen to the cry of the landless with sympathetic ears? The compulsory powers of the new Act would then be immediately enforced whenever necessary: the landless man would be given his land, and he without capital to work it would have money advanced, according to sec. 39 of the Act.

Instead, however, of sympathetic High Commissioners representing the landless class, we had gentlemen appointed who, it has been asserted, were by training and tradition of the landlord class, and the policy of alert inactivity which they have pursued ever since their selection gives point to this assertion. For instance, in spite of the assurances of Sir Edward Strachey and Lord Carrington made to the men applying for the land, the Crookham Hill Dairy Farm, Kent, has been allowed to pass into the hands of a private purchaser for £20 an acre less than what was offered to the Kent County Council. I am told, too, that the Secretary of the Board of Agriculture is opposed to the spirit of the Act of 1907, and that in the hands of the two High Commissioners and of a masterful Secretary the compliant Lord Carrington is as clay.

Thousands of English artisans and labourers who possess the Earth Hunger, as much as ever the children of Israel did when

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they were about to enter the Promised Land, were doomed to a bitter disappointment.

After a succession of Enclosure Acts a great part of rural England has become a private park or sporting preserve for millionaires. The Gateway to the Promised Land had been opened, but opened cautiously. The procession of penniless lacklands clamouring for admission alarmed the porters at the Gate and so obstacles had to be thrown in their way. Even those who had passed through a searching ordeal and found admission and formed co-operative societies were told that no money could be advanced to them (under sec. 39 of the Act) unless two or three years' rent were guaranteed to the Councils, and as this could not be done, these men are now delving and reaping in the twentieth century with implements similar to those used in ancient Palestine. Most of the applicants, however, were refused admission on any terms and their appeal to the Board proved futile.

Not only have the Board shown little disposition to put into force the compulsory powers of the Act to acquire land, but in pursuance of their policy of timidity and mistrust they have evaded the provisions for Credit banking and co-operative organisation by requesting a private association—the Agricultural Organisation Society—to relieve them of these important departments of administration. Deputation after deputation waited on the President of the Board of Agriculture and warned him that dissatisfaction was rife in the country. He still remained satisfied with the work of his officials and the good intentions of the County Councils.*

Then in January of this year came the awakening with the Liberal *débâcle* in nearly every rural district. Threatened with loss of employment; afraid of being evicted from their farm-tied cottages, the labourers in many counties, such as Surrey and Sussex, seeing not an acre of land to fly to as a place of refuge where they could regain their independence, deserted those who

* Since writing the above, Lord Carrington has made a pronouncement to the National Union of Farmers that his Department is about to institute Credit Banks. It is, I think, pathetically humorous that this particular body of large farmers, who are notoriously inimical to small holdings and are perfectly indifferent to small loans, should have been favoured with this special public announcement!

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had promised them *land* for those who promised them *employment*. Not even Old Age Pensions could rake the ashes out of the fire. In rural England the Liberal Government had lost its prestige. The administration of the Small Holdings Act of 1907 had completely broken down, and the country labourer, living in a farm-tied cottage under the shadow of the Big House, settled down once again to his life of despondent servitude. He remained a thrall.

Fresh knowledge came to me with my visit to Ireland in the spring of the year, when I took the opportunity I long waited for to make a thorough investigation of the Small Holding problem in the land of small holdings.

"You have come," said one of the Chiefs of the Department for Agriculture in Upper Merrion Street in Dublin, "you have come to the worst country in the world to see successful small holdings. Out of 600,000 small holdings there are 200,000 scheduled as 'uneconomic,' of which the occupiers are just beginning to be lifted out of a life of wretchedness by what our critics are pleased to call 'a spoon-fed policy.'"

This statement only added interest to my visit, for 75 per cent. of the population of Ireland are dependent on what they can wrest from the soil for their daily bread, and of these 75 per cent. occupy holdings of less than thirty acres in extent. Ireland is indeed a country of poor small holdings—a country

> Where the husbandman's toil and strife
> Little varies to strife and toil.

I need not dwell in this article on the adverse circumstances against which the Irish peasant has had for generations to fight. I wish rather to stress the creative side of Irish Agricultural life and to compare the work done there with the work left undone in England.

It was my desire not only to observe to what extent education and organisation had improved the agricultural outlook in Ireland, but also to watch the effect the policy of peasant proprietorship had upon Irish life from the individual and national point of view. At the present political juncture, too, it was interesting to discover the attitude of the Irish farmer to the land taxes in the Budget.

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I visited some of the poorest districts of Connaught as well as some of the richest pasture-land of Munster and Leinster, and I sought eagerly for instances which Mr. T. M. Healy pointed to with such passionate fervour in his article in the *National Review*, where farmers who on selling their holdings would be heavily taxed by the Budget. I questioned in particular a valuer whose business it was to report on the economic values of old and new holdings. Like most officials in Ireland working for the Congested Districts Board and the Department this gentleman was an enthusiastic Nationalist.

"I have only come across one case," he said, "where a holding exchanged owners for a sum over £500."

"What does Mr. Healy mean, then, by the Budget burdening the poor Irish farmer."

"Oh, I don't know," he replied with a laugh. "I suppose it is just a political move on his part."

Mr. Tim Healy's article is embellished with his mordant wit and it is very entertaining to read, but I cannot see what he gains by stating in one breath that the Irish farmer is terribly poor (which in the majority of cases is perfectly true), and in another that he is an overtaxed capitalist. Mr. Healy cannot have his argument both ways.

Now Ireland is not to be imitated by England in every respect. My visit there confirmed my conviction that whilst England has a great deal to learn from Ireland in the organisation of agriculture, she must beware of multiplying, like Ireland, the number of her landlords. Mr. Hilaire Belloc and Mr. G. K. Chesterton—harnessed together in ploughing the sands—have constantly told us that the individual ownership of land is a passion deeply rooted in the heart of man. Speaking for myself, as the owner of a twenty-acre holding, I can honestly say that I would prefer the nation to own my land so long as I had security of tenure; but I wanted to find out what the Irish farmer thought. I asked several surveyors and valuers working for the Congested Districts Board what their experience had been when re-settling "migrants." They all told me that the first question put to them by the migrants was not whether the new small holding would become his in perpetuity or even

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how long the terminal annuity lasted: it was invariably and anxiously, "how much have I to pay for rent." Each persisted in calling the terminal annuity "rent," perhaps because no one cared to envisage a term of sixty-eight years. The main consideration to each was freedom from eviction by a tyrannous landlord.

It has been the lawyer and not the peasant who has waxed fat over the long series of well-intentioned, but ill-contrived Land Acts. Ownership has undoubtedly had a narrowing effect upon the character of the open-hearted Gael, who, though clothed in tattered garments, has been noted for a courtesy and hospitality unknown in rural England. Every village and town will soon be encompassed by a ring of small landlords, and a conflict is bound to take place between national and municipal needs and the individual avarice of the owners of the land. The landless, tenement-living, sweated worker of Cork and Belfast will assuredly demand his share of his own country and then . . . ? "The land shall not be sold in perpetuity, for the land is Mine" are the words of the first Land Act enunciated by the first great Law-giver. . . .

It is possible that the name of Government stank so much in the nostrils of evicted Irish farmers, dragooned by State Officials, that the State as landlord would at first have been stoutly resisted. Nevertheless, it was a policy that I think should have been boldly pursued and carried out in the same manner as that in which cottages with half an acre or an acre of land have been provided by the State for the Irish labourer.

Very nearly 40,000 of these cottages with half an acre, or, now (under the recent Act) with a whole acre, have been provided all over Ireland at rents varying from *7d.* to *2s. 8d.* a week.

This excellent piece of statecraft which provided the Irish labourer with a one-acre cottage on a one-acre holding with security of tenure at a low rent, might very well have been the basis of settling the agrarian problem. In his social and economic status there is little difference between a labourer who keeps his pig and his donkey on an acre holding, and the farmer who keeps his cow and his pig on his three acres. The erection of these abourer's cottages has done more than anything else to stem

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that tide of emigration which would soon have left the whole of rural Ireland untrodden by any one save tourists, and a few ancient bards left to sing the lamentations of Erin. In England it takes years of hard work to get a Rural District Council to build cottages where they are wanted, and to-day these cottages erected by Councils may be counted on the fingers of one's hand.

It is interesting to note that Mr. A. J. Balfour should have been the first Minister to apply a measure approaching to State Socialism to the poorest districts of Ireland in the creation of a Congested Districts Board. The timidity which has characterised the Ministers of both parties in applying socialistic principles to the colonisation of England was, fortunately for Ireland, overcome when the extinction of the Irish race threatened us.

It was the Congested Districts Board which first "spoon-fed" the half-starving Irish peasants with seed potatoes and seed oats, and bought live-stock for desolate farms. And it is the extension of this policy of giving State-aid to agriculture which has been carried out on scientific lines by the Irish Department. Following the example of Hungary the Department has placed stallions at innumerable farms for the improvement of Irish horses. Valuable bulls and boars reared or bought by the Department are now to be found on thousands of farms, where they are kept for the use of local farmers. A fee of a shilling only is charged for service, and the effect of introducing first-class sires into the poorest parts of Ireland has resulted in a striking improvement in the live-stock of the country. In England we small holders have generally to send our cow or our sow to indifferent bulls or boars for a fee of 5*s*. The ass is used all over Ireland, and after the introduction of the Spanish donkey I found the size and carrying capacity of the cross-bred most marked in the County of Connaught.

It is, though, in agricultural education and in capitalising farmers that the Department has achieved its greatest success. In the first place, the Department realised what our heavy-footed English individualism has made us slow to realise, that agricultural education without economic opportunity was almost useless. From Whitehall we issue leaflets; we issue a journal which is little read; we send out one or two lecturers on the art of rearing poultry or an occasional schoolmaster from the

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County Council schools (who has no practical agricultural education) in order to teach youth at evening classes to measure haystacks; and then we wonder why we still have to import eggs from France, Hungary, and Italy, butter from Denmark, bacon from America, and apples from all over the world.

The Irish Department does not stop at the publication of a leaflet nor does it begin with it. It organises, for instance, a series of experiments at various farms, to find out whether winter dairying would not pay as well, if not better, than summer dairying. The experiments prove that winter dairying pays better, and immediately the result is communicated to every farmer. Then it organises a series of experiments in tillage to show the farmers how much more stock they can keep by using the plough than by growing grass for hay. Its lecturers are literally afield in every county, and by taking off their coats they show the farmers the best kind of plough to use and how to use it. If a farmer says, "I cannot plough because I have one horse only," then the instructor will induce each farmer to lend his neighbour a horse to make a team. If the farmers say, "It is little use growing corn, for the expenses of threshing are so very heavy," then the instructor persuades them to form a co-operative society and to invest in a threshing-machine, costing perhaps £700.

To tell a body of English small holders to go and do likewise would be to court ridicule. Where is the money coming from? In Ireland the local Joint Stock Bank will (by arrangement with the Department) lend the money at 4 per cent. Furthermore, the Department will send down £1000 to a congested district where the farmers have formed a Credit Society. Money is then lent to its members on two personal securities at 2½ per cent. Thus, high finance amongst the lazy, improvident peasants of Connaught is based not on property as an asset, but upon personal character. By some curious psychological reason which remains veiled in mystery, whilst the peasant in Germany and the farmer in Ireland have proved themselves worthy of trust, the labourer or small holder in England cannot be trusted by our own timid Government. When our Board at Whitehall is approached for money it turns to the Agricultural

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Organisation Society at Westminster and says to them, "Could not you raise a little money to help these small holders," and the Agricultural Organisation Society chivalrously responds, "We will try" It has raised in all something approaching four figures for the capitalisation of the small holders of England!

One result of this generous policy in Ireland has been the gradual extinction of that petty village tyrant "the gombeenman" or money-lender. He is sometimes a tradesman, or more often a tradesman and publican combined who is in the habit of extorting heavy interest form his borrowers, resulting often in his eventually acquiring the live-stock and then the farm of his victim. A story was told to me by the Mother Superior of a convent school in a lonely district of Connaught. "I gave," she told me, "a little pig to one of our poor peasant girls who came here every day to learn the duties of a farmer's wife. She took the pig home to her mother and it was kept until it was worth £4. The local gombeenman passing one day noticed the pig and told the girl's mother that he would buy it. The family was delighted, and after the pig had been taken away they made application for the money. 'Oh,' he replied, 'your grandmother owed me £4 so I am keeping the pig.'"

The gombeenman, however, exists in England as well as in Ireland. Whilst the more respectable type is in evidence in Lombard Street, there is not, I should think, a single village in England without its gombeenman in some form or other. As the village grocer he is too readily approachable by the labourer, who is bound by debt to this petty tradesman on the one hand, and to his employer for his home on the other, and thus the labourer remains in England almost as much a thrall as he was in the days when he dare not venture out of his parish. To the farmer, the large cattle-dealer or the auctioneer is often the accommodating gombeenman. In one way or another he persists, an ugly feature of rural England. Now in Ireland Credit Banking and Agricultural Organisation have been so far developed in the direction of co-operative creameries that Ireland has now become a serious rival to Denmark. The Irish farmer to-day obtains as good a price for his butter as the Danish farmer. It has, however, been contended that the English small holder would not gratefully accept the 5*d*. or 6*d*. a gallon for his milk,

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which is all the Irish farmer makes out of the milk he sends to the co-operative creameries. But there is no reason why the English small holder, with his market close at hand, should be confined to butter-making. He might form his co-operative dairy for the wholesale disposal of milk, and obtain 8*d*. or 10*d*. a gallon from the home markets.

The isolated holding in England is an economic anomaly in these days of capitalistic combination. Fighting his battle of life alone the small holder is struggling unarmed against marshalled battalions. The Irish have had the racial advantage, it is true, of an inheritance of communal action derived from generations of clan-loving forefathers—a bond of unity strengthened by their heroic stand against tyrannous penal laws and ruthless landlordism. On the other hand, much of Ireland—the west in particular—which lies out of the track of trade, is badly served by railways, is littered with stones, or lies water-logged in dreary bogs. Even to-day farmers of thousands of uneconomic holdings leave their farms at a time when their personal labour is most required in order to earn ready money in the hay-field and corn-fields of England. This fact alone poignantly illustrates the fierce struggle for existence. This fact, too, points to the difficulties which beset the path of agricultural teachers and organisers. And when we come to realise how much has already been achieved by a race smitten down by poverty and despair we shall begin to realise the revivifying effect of State-aid and co-operative action.

In England we should hear less about taxing the food of the people were our Government to arouse itself from its supine timidity and, drawing upon its boundless resources, make it possible for England to feed herself. It is not the instructor so much as the organiser and the treasurer that we require at work on this side of the Irish Sea.

We are on the eve of an agrarian revolution. On one hand we have a political party saying: "We will lend you land to use." On the other hand we have another political party shouting with emphasis: "We will *sell* you land for you to *own*." But neither political party takes one step to advance the money to render their policy practicable. Between the two the English peasant stands a bewildered and tragic figure.

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Book Notices

FICTION

THE RAJAH'S PEOPLE. By J. A. R. WYLIE. Mills and Boon. 6*s*.

Miss Wylie would have done well to give us a real Indian instead of a Britisher in disguise as the hero of her story. We do not quite believe in this Rajah who is brought up to hate the English, grows to love them, begins to hate them again as a result of being fooled by an English flirt and an English financier, and then, when he is about to head an insurrection against them, suddenly turns to love and submission once more on discovering that he is himself a long-lost Englishman. If you can interest yourself in this sort of a character, however, you will find *The Rajah's People* both entertaining and exciting. The author has good narrative gifts, and might even achieve something in the matter of character-drawing, if she were not so horribly fluent.

THE ELM-TREE ON THE MALL. By ANATOLE FRANCE. THE WICKER-WORK WOMAN. By ANATOLE FRANCE. Translated by M. P. WILLCOCKS. Lane. 6*s*. each.

Here Miss Willcocks gives us a capable translation of *L'Orme du Mail* and an excellent translation of *La Mannequin d'Osier*. These, it is scarcely necessary to mention, are the first two volumes in the series of novels through which M. Bergaret walks, a meditative and ironically minded figure. Neither of them is a novel in any ordinary sense of the word. They are shifting arrangements of ideas, criticisms, ironies, and exquisitely drawn miniature portraits of men and women. And perhaps we should add, exquisitely drawn sketches of the public places and the "interiors" of a French university town. Reading these books, one feels that, if it were not for his charm, Anatole France would almost be the most disillusioning writer of modern times. His charm, however, creates a new and delightful illusion for us out of the disillusions of reality. Politician, theologian, wit, creative artist, personality, something of a sensualist, with a religious thread in his mockery, he may be said to have made of pessimism an intellectual paradise. Nowhere does he do it to more pleasant purpose than in the Bergaret series of novels.

KILMENY OF THE ORCHARD. By L. M. Montgomery. Pitman. 6*s*.

"Kilmeny's mouth is like a love-song made incarnate in sweet flesh," says Eric Marshall to his father in the excitement of an approved engagement. Now young men do not say things like that to their fathers about young women, even in Canada. Consequently, no realistically inclined person, after catching sight of this sentence, is likely to attempt to read

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Miss Montgomery's book. The sentimentalists are a wider audience than the realists, however, and thousands will read with eagerness this pleasant, somewhat high-flown tale of the college-bred young townsman who goes off to Prince Edward Island to teach a school in place of an invalid friend, and who there meets Kilmeny of the mouth. Kilmeny, unhappily, is dumb, but, when she sees Eric about to be murdered with an axe, she suddenly recovers her speech and shouts aloud. As the curtain falls, we see on Eric's face "a light as of one who sees a great glory widening and deepening down the vista of his future."

HISTORY

A Mediæval German. Human Documents from the Four Centuries preceding the Reformation. Selected, translated, and annotated by G. G. Coulton, M.A. Illustrated. Constable. 21*s.* net.

As a key—or a multitude of keys—to the spirit of the life of the Middle Ages, the book is worth a hundred solemn histories and compilations. The author has passed thirty enthusiastic years among all kinds of mediæval writings, and the present volume gives us a bird's-eye view of the field of his pleasant adventures. Very wisely he has taken little or nothing from the books which have already a place on the general shelves. He has included only two passages from Froissart, for instance, and the inclusion of these is justified by the fact that the popular Globe Froissart contains neither of them. Cæsarius of Heisterbach, Jacques de Vitry, Trevisa's Higden, Etienne de Bourbon, Thomas of Chantimpré, and Wright's "Latin Stories," are among the most generous of Mr. Coulton's sources. Naturally religion plays a large part in his pages, though most of the passages are human and historical, not didactic. On the whole, the effect of the volume is hostile to the modern enthusiasm for the Middle Ages. It gives us a dark-toned picture of lawless kings, of Petruchio-husbands, of corrupt and greedy churchmen, of men and women so steeped in superstition that we hear of them stealing the body of the Lord from the church services for their magic purposes. It is well to remember, however, that the outcry against sin in these mediæval chronicles is itself a proof of the existence of an ardent passion for righteousness. *A Mediæval German*, indeed, takes us into a world in which men fought daily under the banners of Heaven and Hell, and in which virtue and vice were not yet unduly moderated by a legal and constitutional submissiveness.

Mr. Coulton has given us a book full of the colour and variety and drama of the Middle Ages.

Mad Majesties; of Raving Rulers and Submissive Subjects. By Dr. Angelo S. Rappoport. Greening and Co. 16*s.* net.

Is cruelty "madness"? Is sensuality, brutality, gluttony, irritability? Dr. Rappoport apparently belongs to the very modern school which would return a "yes" to these interrogations, not so much from his choice of royal subjects—the god of eugenics knows more and plenty to choose from—as from his determination to establish mental defect in each and all of their ancestors. His main case—that the persistent inbreeding among royal families makes timidity a very unsafe principle on which to base a monar-

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chical system—does not require such uncertain support. The constitutional frailty of some of the royal houses of Europe is admitted; and the cases he discusses in this volume—Juana "La Loca" of Spain; Don Carlos, son of Philip II.; Christian VII. of Denmark; Eric XIV. of Sweden; and Ivan the Terrible—can be paralleled by instances of much later date, as, indeed, the author proposes to do in another volume. But he has too many of the vices of the "expert"; he sees men only as patients, and generally as more or less crazy patients. By his standards, it may be doubted whether we had a really sane King of England between Elizabeth and Victoria (with the possible exception of Charles II.).

LITERATURE

MEMOIRS OF THE DUCHESSE DE DINO, 1836–1840. Edited, with notes and biographical index, by COUNTESS RADZIWILL. Second Series. Heinemann.

The Duchess was a niece of Talleyrand—gifted, charming, popular in London during her uncle's term as ambassador there, but possessed of a staidness and intrinsic piety which must have helped to maintain the balance of the household. This second series of selections from her diaries and letters is concerned largely with the old age of Talleyrand, a pathetic and rather intractable old age, with a wonderful flare-up of the expiring candle in his address to the Academy only a few days before his death at the age of eighty-four. It was the Duchess's happiness to have reconciled him to the Church of Rome in these last days; and an interesting account of the transaction is contained in a long letter to the Abbé Dupanloup. There is also in the volume much about Louis Philippe politics, a good deal of personal gossip, and some entertaining touches about the young Queen Victoria, one of whose offences it was that she "gallops down the streets of London through all the omnibuses and cabs." "Her old aunts think this is very shocking," adds the Duchess, "and so it is." Then there was the Queen's rebuke—she had then been two months on the throne—to the Duchess of Sutherland, who had kept her waiting; "My dear Duchess, pray do not let this happen again; neither you nor I ought to keep any one waiting." "Was not that very well said?" is the diarist's comment.

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE WORLD? By G. K. CHESTERTON. Cassell.

Another of Mr. Chesterton's whirlwinds of words, and just as fructifying. We find all his familiar tenets restated with that amazing exuberance of his—his hatred of science, his denial of law, his distrust of politics, his obstinate mediævalism, his general assumption that everything that we have done since (say) the date when Jack climbed the Beanstalk has been incredibly foolish and perverse. And some of his misrepresentations are almost triumphs. We have come to believe in the influence of heredity: Mr. Chesterton calls this "Calvinism" and says it means that a man "is judged before he is born." The science of eugenics has arrived none too soon: Mr. Chesterton waves it airily away with the platitude that the combination of parental qualities in a child is chemical and not mathematical, and that "a boy may actually get his weakness from his father's strength." Some of us (unlike Mr. Bottomley) desire that it shall be a

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better world for our children than it has been for us; whereupon Mr. Chesterton derides us as "still glowing with the memory of to-morrow morning." Socialism aims at eliminating the taint of dishonesty from commerce: Mr. Chesterton criticises Socialism on the ground that it will leave commerce "so horribly the same." And so on—a brilliant and bewildering book, enchanting in its quaintness of fancy and fervour and urgency of words, but barren, empty, and ineffectual. We gather vaguely that Mr. Chesterton's cure for the ills of the world is some sort of peasant proprietorship, and he adjures the great ones of the earth to abandon their wealth and lands to that end. It does not seem to have occurred to him that they may decline the invitation. He might write another book on that assumption.

POETRY

THE SINGING CARAVAN. By HENRY BAERLEIN. "The Wisdom of the East" series. John Murray. 2*s.* net.

The shadows of camels and their riders are thrown upon the ford as the caravan moves on beneath the desert moon. A goodly fellowship passes before us, of Arabian poets drawn from Egypt and Syria, Morocco and Andalusia, all pilgrims bound for the Mecca of Immortality. At intervals, between the plash of water and the crunching of the sands, a solitary voice rises into the clear night singing some snatch of Ibn al Motazz:

> Our old moon put her horns away and the dark nights were three;
> There danced a girl moon through the clouds, pallid as ivory.
> At break of day went Jupiter patrolling down the sky,
> Just as the lonely watchman with a lantern passing by.

Then another takes up the tale, and we hear the exquisite lament of Abu Firas, Prince of Syria, and captive of Constantinople:

> O night, why do you work so grievously,
> For ever sweeping back old friends to me?
> Behold the sorrow-laden people fall
> Upon the breast of sleep, and I may call
>
> For that; aye, call. The Syrian breezes win
> Towards my heart, they softly enter in.
> They bring a message o'er the troubled sea
> That many Syrians remember me.

Mr. Baerlein has recalled for us the magic of white nights beneath the Syrian stars, and the secrets known to the roses of Mumil in Granada when Allah was God and Southern Spain His earthly paradise.

POEMS. By J. W. FEAVER. A. C. Fifield. 1*s.* 6*d.* net.

Mr. Feaver can write a couple of good sonnets, and other neat exercises in verse. "The Army of Man," for instance, might go into a primer of verse-making as an example of the way to write a song of the Brotherhood of Labour: it contains everything except the motive power, the divine fire. Only fire again could successfully carry "Boyhood in Revolt" into a

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hundred English hexameters. Then he writes a dialogue in Browning language between a Merchant and a Poet on the Brotherhood of Man. But as a revolutionist Mr. Feaver is very fitful; for the next day Southwark Cathedral and the world in general inspire him with exemplary reverence. He also writes several poems in various metres and the classical manner: but here again the syrens sing no more perilous enchantment than

Come away, come away
O leave the heavy oar.

Mr. Feaver should follow his own heart and not the manner of Tennyson, who, by the way, has written a better poem than he on the subject of "The Dying Swan."

SOCIAL AND TRAVEL

My Friend the Indian. By James McLaughlin. Constable. 10*s.* 6*d.* net.

The march of "civilisation" has certain affinities with that of Juggernaut. It is well that Mr. McLaughlin (who has been an official among the Sioux for thirty-eight years) is an authoritative witness, or what he has to say of the injustice and ill-treatment practised by the white man might be disregarded as the whine of a "sentimentalist" or the complaint of a "Little American" (no doubt there is some such discredited party). He tells of persitent malpractice and exploitation, and, what is almost worse, of such foolish mismanagement in recent times that the once brave Red Man, who would suffer torture without a murmur, is now a shiftless, dispirited loafer,—"a sort of half-starved ward in Chancery." Mr. McLaughlin pleads earnestly for the abandonment of the policy of treating the Indians as perpetual paupers, and urges that the land and money which the United States Government now holds on their behalf should be restored to them under conditions making for manliness and independence. The traits of the Red Man are set forth in some detail in this excellent book, along with much illuminating anecdote.

Ups and Downs of a Wandering Life. By Walter Seymour. John Long, Ltd. 10*s.* 6*d.* net.

Mr. Seymour is a member of a well-known sea-faring and adventurous family; and his part has been to combine the minimum of officialdom with the maximum of "fun." He has been a confirmed rover; has wandered through a dozen lands in a dozen different capacities; has, with an equal mind, seen revolutions in South America, incipient railways at Delagoa Bay, and factory-life in Birmingham, and has collected and set down an assortment of stories, some of doubtful moral and others of extreme antiquity. It is a breezy book, and almost too autobiographical.

Sicilian Ways and Days. By Louise Caico. John Long.

A pleasant little book of gossip about Sicily and the ways of the people, not too long, not very profound, characteristic of the modern mania for book-making. People who saw the Sicilians over here know more about them than ever this volume can teach them. However, if it is quite journalistic in kind, its kindliness and sympathy make it readable and even enjoyable.

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